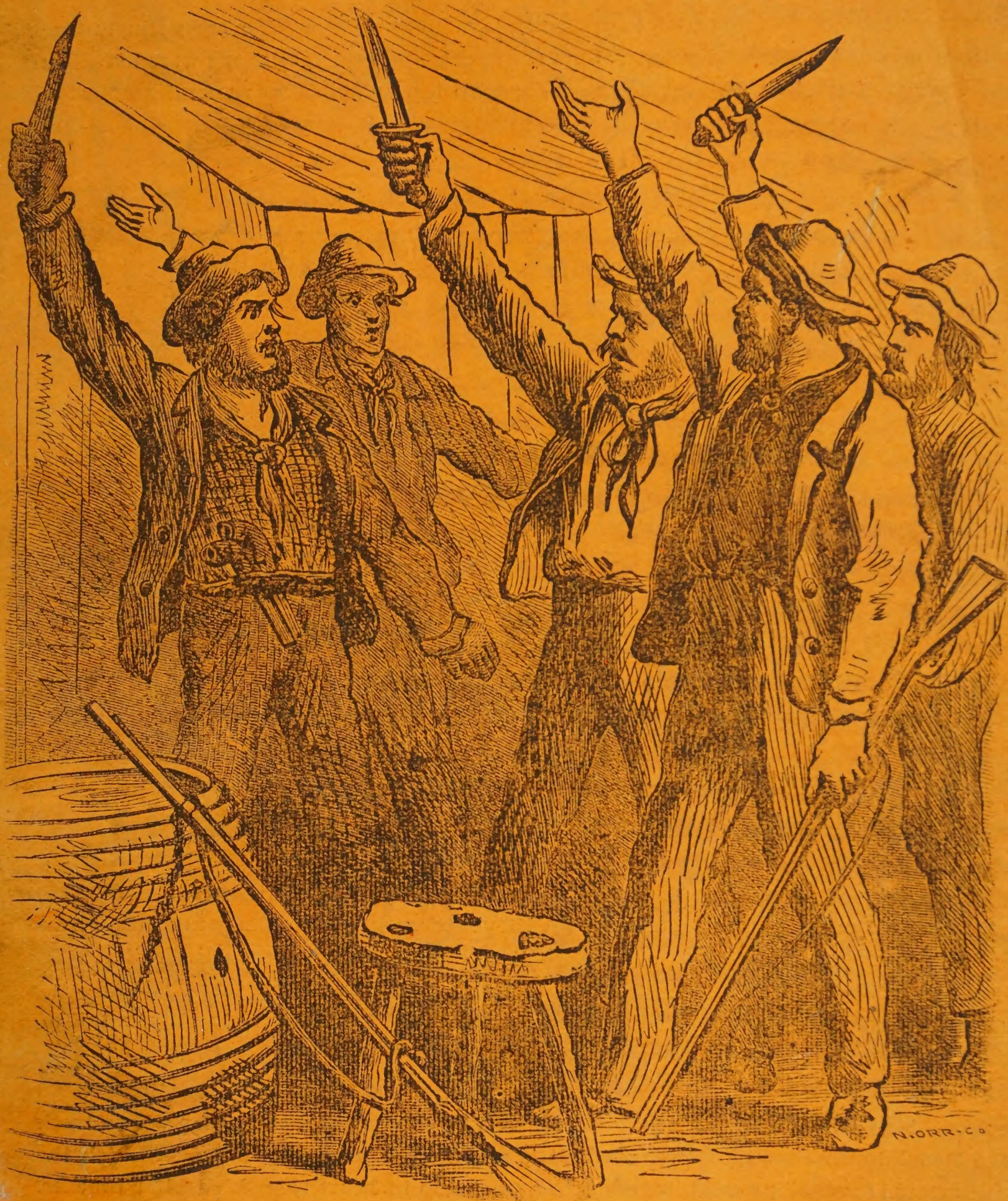


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THE BLUE BROTHERHOOD;

OR

THE YOUNG PATROON'S INHERITANCE.

BY NEWTON M. CURTIS.

NEW YORK:
BEADLE AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,
98 WILLIAM STREET.

THE BLUE BROTHERHOOD

OR

THE YOUNG PATROON'S LIBERTY

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THE BLUE BROTHERHOOD;

OR,

THE YOUNG PATROON'S INHERITANCE.

CHAPTER I.

THE DYING MAN'S WILL.

Nor many miles above the present site of the village of Caughnawaga, there was, in 1777, a massive, extensive stone building, called at that time "Van Kempen's Castle." It was reared upon the bluff bank of the Mohawk River; and it did indeed resemble a castle, and in stormy times, of which there were many in those days, it was used as such.

In reality, however, and ordinarily, the structure was used as a farm-house, or rather, as a Manor house, for Abram Van Kempen, its owner and occupant, was a wealthy and extensive landholder in that region, and many of his rich, luxuriant acres surrounded his residence. From the window of his own domicile, he could see quite a village, composed of neat cottages, occupied by his tenants, and those who were more or less associated with his business and interests.

This settlement which was, in the

first instance, merely an agricultural one, did not fail to attract the attention of the petty traders and speculators, with which the country swarmed; and soon after, the possessions of Van Kempen became noted for their neatness, extent, and productiveness, several "stores" were located thereaway, and finally a church and a tavern were reared.

All these circumstances contributed to make Van Kempen's castle a place of considerable trade and notoriety.—The Valley of the Mohawk, was the most populous region of the colony of New York, if we except the region immediately contiguous to the great city.

It was rich, also, in its agricultural products, and offered many inducements to adventurers.

The house we have mentioned, was large, two stories high, and so heavy and solid was the masonry comprising it, that it could withstand the battering of heavy artillery. The windows were high, narrow, and shielded with strong iron bars, thickly set; and the ponderous oak doors were completely

filled with the huge iron spikes, and secured by locks of the most undoubted construction. seen, therefore, that nothing but interest, the power of gold, could attach any one to his person or his fortunes

In addition to these formidable securities, a tall stone fence, of quarried granite, and covered with cement, surrounded the castle; inclosing the garden, a tasty and well-trimmed park, a fruit orchard, and a yard that sloped towards the river, studded with little groves, and adorned with clumps of flowering shrubs. Van Kempen was married in early life to a young lady of the Massachusetts colony, whose only dower was a beautiful person, a cultivated, sensitive mind, and a proud, but generous disposition. From some cause that never was explained, the marriage proved unhappy, and the cruel and callous husband absolutely drove his wife from beneath his roof. Where she went no one knew, and her fate had long since ceased to be a matter of discourse.

The enclosures, within which the castle was situated, was entered by means of several gates, and they, like the doors of the dwelling, were strengthened by every appliance that art and ingenuity could suggest. If we except a large retinue of servants, an inseparable attachment to the establishment of a Dutch settler in the region of the Mohawk, in the times in which we write, Van Kempen's family was small. It consisted of himself, a favorite nephew, Hans Van Kempen, as he was called, a niece, the daughter of a deceased sister, her servant, or rather her waiting-maid, and demi-companion, a housekeeper, a matron of great experience, with a vinegar disposition, as all housekeepers have, and the servants before alluded to.

Abram Van Kempen, the owner of the castle, and of the fair lands surrounding it, was, at the time this narrative opens, nearly sixty years of age, feeble, worn and emaciated. He had once possessed a strong iron constitution, but he early made the acquisition of wealth the ruling object of his existence, and toiled and studied beyond the powers of his endurance. Now, in the decline of life, in the room of enjoying a green old age, in which to partake of the fruits of his labors, he was suffering from palsied limbs, soured disposition, and the prospect of a speedy and unregretted departure from the scene of his greatness. Hans Van Kempen was the constant companion of his uncle, and he was in every sense a kindred spirit. He was of a tall, slender build, with light grey eyes, hair of fiery red, a coarse, large mouth, an inveterate pug nose, and sal-

We say unregretted departure, for Abram had not many friends, in fact, no *real* ones. He was always miserly, and never scrupled to resort to low, unmanly acts to forward his views; and beside, this nature was ever cold, unsocial, and morose. It may be easily low and sunken cheeks, and these features, added to an awkward, shuffling gait, a sheepish and diffident manner, and a dread of society, made him appear like a changeling.

Yet he was far from a fool—indeed so much so, that the knave predomin-

ated. He possessed as much low cunning as his uncle, was penurious to meanness, and was also endowed with no small share of courage and daring.

For many years he had resided with his uncle. He had searched his character, studied his foibles, espoused his prejudices, and in fact used every effort to secure his confidence, and he had succeeded to a charm. The rich landholder was childless, so far as he *knew* or cared, and determined, therefore to make Hans his heir, and a representative of a long line of Van Kempens, after his demise.

Viola Fordham, the niece, was a most lovely girl, of some nineteen years, and she bloomed in the cheerless mansion of her uncle and guardian, like a rose in the desert. She was eminently beautiful, with dark brown hair, hazel eyes of almost supernatural brightness, a fair, clear complexion, lips of the richest red, and teeth of dazzling whiteness. Her form was large and full, but there was nothing of coarseness about it; it was, in fact, most exquisitely moulded.

The mother of Viola had married an English officer, who visited the country during the French war, and who, immediately after his union, returned with his bride to Europe. He continued to reside there until his death, which occurred a few years years after his marriage, and then his wife with her child, Viola, returned to America the possessor of an extensive fortune, and took up her abode with her brother.

After being comfortably settled at the castle, she devoted herself to the education of her daughter, in which task she labored continually until her death,

which happened two years previous to the date of this tale. In her dying moments she entrusted her child, and her immense fortune, to the care and custody of her brother.

Like most of the men of wealth and aristocratic pretensions, Van Kempen was a Tory. He was a most bitter and virulent one too, and nothing but his age and his infirmities prevented him from taking the field in his own person. He cursed the Whigs, as an unprincipled rabble, whose object was the subversion of all order and government, that they might be enabled to plunder the rich and fortunate.

Hans, of course, echoed the sentiments of his uncle. His narrow mind could not comprehend the truth and nobleness of patriotic principles, and he often thought with delight upon a red coat, a tall plume, and the unrestrained privilege of murder and robbery amongst his Whig neighbors. Although he would undoubtedly have professed Whig principles, had his uncle taken the lead, yet, in this case, his sentiments and natural prejudices were in favor of the King.

He already looked upon himself as the possessor of his uncle's wealth, and had more than once chalked out the course he should pursue, when he in fact took possession of his expected dower.

Early one bright morning in April, the family of the castle were aroused from their slumbers by the appearance of unusual and very alarming symptoms in the rich old landholder. The family physician was immediately summoned, and declared soon after his arrival, that the life of his patron could be prolonged

out a few days at farthest. This was appalling news to the miser, yet he was forced to credit it ; and, in order that all things might be prepared during his life, according to his wishes, he at once sent for a lawyer to arrange his will.

Hans himself attended to this request. In 1777, lawyers were not so much abundant as at the present day, and to procure one was often a matter of difficulty. Abram Van Kempen was withal a man of notoriety, and he must needs have one of no small celebrity. Albany was the nearest point at which one could be procured, and to Albany Hans posted as fast as the limbs of a fleet horse could convey him.

Arrived there, he was recommended to one John Fozzle, whose qualifications seemed most likely to meet the emergency.

Fozzle was every inch a lawyer, not only in professional keenness and sagacity, but all his feelings, all his instincts—his ambition—his desires—his talents, delighted in the mazes, the perplexities, the schemings, the trickeries of litigation.

He was some fifty years of age, small in stature, yet possessing an eye and a mind that comprehended all the points and bearings of any matter presented to him, with the quickness of lightning.—In his management he was cool, quiet, and stealthy, yet scarcely seeming to know his own, or his clerk's situation.

Fozzle accompanied Hans to Van Kempen's castle. In a little time after his arrival, he was seated beside the dying man's bed.

The occasion that had called the at-

torney to the place was alluded to by Abram.

"I believe," he said, faintly, "that these cursed Whigs (God forgive me for profanity) have not yet subverted the laws of the land, and as I have but a few moments to live, or rather, but a few days at farthest, I am desirous of disposing of my temporal matters.

"I suppose you desire a will of me?" replied Fozzle.

"I do."

Parchment was forthwith produced, the writing implements, and after the preliminaries were all arranged, the attorney said :

"Now express your desires regarding your property, and I will incorporate them in this instrument."

"It is an easy matter," replied Van Kempen ; "excepting a few annuities, and some other trifling matters, I shall leave my effects to my nephew, Hans Van Kempen."

"Are you childless?" asked Fozzle.

Abram started.

"I am."

"Were you ever married?"

The sick man stared.

"Why do you ask me that?"

"It is important that I should know."

"Yes, I was married."

"And your wife is dead?"

Abram hesitated, but finally answered :

"She is."

The will was finally completed in due form. Fozzle had been informed that his client was wealthy, but the extent of his possessions, as they were enumerated, and described to him by Abram,

absolutely startled him.

He could not help exclaiming, mentally :

“What an *immense* property ! Every day increases its value. This Hans Van Kempen is truly fortunate.”

“I have another matter,” said Abram, after the will was signed, duly witnessed, and the room cleared.

“Mention it,” said Fozzle.

“When my sister died, some two years since, she made me the guardian of her daughter, who is now an inmate of my house. She also placed in my hands her fortune, which is very large, and which she is totally unqualified to manage. In view of my present situation, cannot I appoint a new guardian, and a new agent for the custody of the money ?”

“Of course.”

“Without her consent ?”

“She had better be consulted.”

“Is it absolutely necessary ?”

“Perhaps not.”

“But are you sure ?”

“Yes ; quite sure.”

“Then I appoint Hans as her guardian and agent.”

“How old is your niece ?”

“Somewhere about nineteen.”

“When does she come into possession of her property ?”

“When she marries.”

“And not before.”

“No.”

“And in case she never marries ?”

“It reverts to me and my heirs.”

Fozzle smiled, but the sick man did not observe it. The matter was duly arranged, and Hans Van Kempen was

appointed the guardian and agent of his fair cousin, Viola Fordham.

After receiving his fees, Fozzle resumed his journey home ; but before he left that delightful region of the country he resolved to spend a day or two at the little inn, in the settlement.

In a few days after the departure of the attorney, Abram died. If there was not much grief exhibited at his funeral, there was much of pomp displayed, and the attendance was numerous.

Hans Van Kempen at once assumed a new character. He was suddenly transformed into a great man—the great man of that rich region.

He was the patron of the settlement of Van Kempen's Castle, and the possessor of immense wealth.

CHAPTER II.

THE FOUNDLING

At the extreme eastern part of the settlement of Van Kempen's Castle, sheltered from the winds of the South and North, and fronting the sunny and genial south, was a long cottage of somewhat unusual dimensions, and which at once drew the attention of the passer by, on account of the superior neatness and taste everywhere displayed about it.

The windows and doors were trellised with sweet vines, and a neat paling of pointed faggots completely enclosed it, protecting a small but luxuriant

lawn from the depredations of strolling he had been christened by his self-con-
cattle. At a little distance in the rear stituted guardian by the name of Bryan
was an ample vegetable garden, and Blonday.
even this homely and neglected spot
bore ample traces of a refined and gen-
tle hand, for every spare space not ap-
propriated to vegetables of the esculent
kind, was carefully planted with flow-
ers, which, in their season, emitted a
delicious odor, and unfolded their gor-
geous and variegated petals to the
bright rays of the sun.

The building itself was of superior
workmanship and finish. It was com-
pact and conveniently arranged, and
bore about it an air of superlative com-
fort and contentment. Its very external
seemed to speak of peace and plenty
within.

It was the residence of Edward
Fielding, a somewhat aged man, who
had long been in the service of Abram
Van Kempen, as a field laborer. By
his strict economy, his faithfulness, and
the watchfulness that he displayed for
his master's interest, he had secured his
confidence, and had been favored with
many privileges.

Fielding was a descendant of the pil-
grims, and partook largely of their pe-
culiar characteristics. He was deeply
impressed with a love of Whig princi-
ples, yet knowing the impotence of his
influence, he had carefully concealed
his sentiments from his employer.

His family was composed of his wife,
who occupied the cottage, a daughter,
a blooming and modest maiden, the at-
tendant of Viola Fordham at the Castle,
and a youth of some nineteen years,
known in the neighborhood as the
"Foundling of the Mohawk," though

No one could pass a day at the set-
tlement of Van Kempen's Castle, with-
out the confident conviction that Bryan
Blonday was one of the most important
personages of the place, for either for
good or bad, for praise or censure, his
name was upon the tongue of every gos-
sip, and every youth and maiden.

Bryan was a remarkable young man,
for though a boy in years, there was
that in his precocious nature, such an
air of nobleness in his carriage, such
evidences of thought and intellect in
his language, that he had become the
companion of men, and one possessed
of more than a usual share of influence
also.

When but a few months old, Field-
ing discovered him, warmly clad, and
safely bestowed in a box, upon the
banks of the river, near a place of his
usual labor. The box also contained
a small supply of clothing, a gold ring
of peculiar formation, and a note ad-
dressed to the honest laborer, in which
he was requested to rear the child,
name him Bryan Blonday, and retain
the ring in some safe and secure place,
until the infant was of an age to mingle
in the world, and then to present it to
him as the gift of his mother.

This singular trust Fielding had
most religiously fulfilled. He bore the
child to his home, placed it under the
charge of his excellent wife, and now
that he had acquired the stature of
manhood, he felt that his affection could
not have been greater were he his own
child. He had been scrupulously

trained and educated, and the seed had fallen upon good ground, and brought forth its hundred fold.

In the early times of which we are talking, the means of procuring an education were of difficult attainment.—Indeed, but very few enjoyed them, but fortune favored Bryan, for his protector proved a most competent instructor, and his mind was early filled with solid and useful facts. At length Abram Van Kempen was forced to procure a professed teacher for his nephew Hans, and Fielding prevailed upon his employer to suffer the foundling to partake of his instructional provisions.

To this arrangement Abram consented, as soon as he ascertained that it would be the occasion of no additional expense.

For several years, therefore, Bryan was daily in attendance at the Castle. He soon became a favorite with the teacher, who chanced to be a man of excellent mind and principles, and who early discovered that his young pupil possessed talents of the highest order. He gave him every advantage in his power, and the result was that he made such proficiency as left Hans far in the background.

This circumstance was eventually productive of much mischief, for it excited the jealousy of Abram, and transformed Hans into a bitter and relentless enemy. As the boys grew older, and as they approached manhood, another subject of contention arose, which will be explained in its proper course.

As we have said, Bryan Blonday was, at the time of which we treat, some

nineteen years of age. He was of a slight figure, one that would at a first glance be called very slight; yet a careful observation would show that there was an abundance of full, well rounded muscle, and a true and classic symmetry of figure, denoting strength and agility.

His features were handsome, and wore an expression of that keen and active mental energy of such vast utility in times of excitement and danger. His forehead was full, and broad, and rather high, the eye black and keen, and the mouth of that kind denoting firmness and decision. His hair was bright and sunny, and scarcely threw a shadow upon his pale cheek.

There was an indescribable grace, purely national and easy, in all the movements of the young man. There was none of the stiffness and awkwardness usually observant in backwoods youth about him, but in any and every society he was graceful, cool and interesting.

Such was Bryan Blonday in person, as near as we can describe him. He was equally as superior in mental endowments.

His courage amounted to absolute daring. From the first commencement of the quarrel between the mother land and the colonies, he had espoused the people's cause, and although the great mass of people at Van Kempen's Castle were Tories, he had publicly and earnestly avowed his opinions.

His opinions, and his firmness in expressing them, were secretly applauded by a few, among whom was his protector and friend, Fielding, but during the life of Abram, it was a dangerous

matter to be known as a Whig, and the Tories were, therefore, permitted to have it all their own way.

The taste displayed about Fielding's cottage was Bryan's work. He had erected the paling, he trained the vines, he trimmed the lawn, he planted and watered the flowers. From his earliest boyhood he had delighted in his moral task, and his far-sighted guardian hailed with delight this unmistakable evidence of the purity of his mind.

For a year or two before the death of Mr. Van Kempen, that wealthy man regarded Bryan with especial hatred. He had even desired Fielding to cast him off, and turn him loose upon the world, alleging that he was a viper who would eventually repay his kindness with a sting. Sometimes Fielding would allay his wrath by entreaties, and sometimes by an unyielding display of firmness.

The cause of this hatred was a partiality in the mind of his niece, Viola Fordham, for the person of this Foundling. For a long time Abaam had determined to unite her fortune with his own, by a marriage between her and Hans. Abram never thought or cared about the affections of the parties that he intended or desired thus to unite.— He merely thought that in point of blood and property, Hans was the only person in that distant region worthy of her hand, and then he thought, too, that her fortune, consisting of the most part in ready money, would make an imposing and formidable addition to the power and influence of his nephew,—

He had often instructed Hans in his intentions.

Viola Fordham did love the Foundling. It was notoriously the talk of the whole settlement, and not a man or woman could be found who wondered at it. Bryan was so handsome, so accomplished, so bold, and evidently so much superior to his associates, that it could not be otherwise than that Viola should love him.

Yet no one deemed it to be other than a youthful, thoughtless passion, which every one experiences a hundred times in life. It merely seemed a natural and decided preference between playmates, that would leave no trace in after years.

Ah! how frequently the world misjudges. In fact they never look into philosophy, but jump at their conclusions under the influence of wishes or prejudices.

Viola Fordham did *not* love with a girlish passion. Under the excellent and judicious training of her mother, her mind was already matured, and she was a *woman*, in every acceptation of the term. The society in which she lived, the scenery around her, the times, and the conditions of the communities, were also favorable to the early development of mental powers.

She loved Bryan Blonday with a truthful, earnest passion. Her whole soul, and her whole heart, were devoted to his welfare, and she was never so happy as when in his company. Since her uncle's jealousy had been excited, her opportunities for meeting him were very few; but absence, in her case, had

only increased the depth and fervency of her attachment. movements and his conduct would cease.

There was a spice of romance in her disposition, indeed a large portion of this sanguine and ardent ingredient; and many of her happiest hours were spent in bright day-dreams, in which her lover was the prominent feature, and the engrossing character.

Bryan Blonday reciprocated this attachment. Indeed the boldness of his character, and the almost fierce strength of his powerful passions, caused him to regard her with a feeling that was a near approach to idolatry.

For months his passion had been progressing from stage to stage, and at the time of Abram's death, he did not move or think, unless her image was present to her mind. In strains of earnest and impassioned eloquence, he had informed of her of his feelings, and had not plead in vain, for evidences of their acceptability. With a feeling of burning impatience, he was awaiting the arrival of a time when he could claim her hand as his own.

The attempt to keep lovers apart, is in general, a useless one; especially if they are of the determined and resolute class, as were Bryan and Viola. The youth had been forbidden to visit Van Kempen's Castle, or the grounds in its vicinity, by the crusty Abram; yet he had managed, by the assistance of one of the landholder's servants, to communicate occasionally with the object of his adoration. When Abram payed the debt of nature, it seemed that fortune had favored him, for he did not doubt but all restrictions regarding his

In this, Bryan was destined to disappointment. Abram Van Kempen had transmitted his hatreds and his jealousies, as well as his broad acres, and Hans was his sole heir.

The nephew had determined to drive his poor and almost unfriended rival from the field.

"I must bestir myself now," said Hans, as he was sitting in his uncle's usual room, a few days after the burial. "I am now the possessor of vast wealth; aye, and the master of innumerable vassals. It is in my power to crush this Bryan Blonday, this nameless foundling, who seems to be so unusual a favorite in this settlement. Without doubt, the poor fool thinks himself certain of the love of my fair cousin, Viola, because from unavoidable circumstances she has tolerated his presence. I am her guardian, now, and shall at once enter upon my duties!"

Small minds always over-estimate their power and advantages. The complacent Hans supposed that nothing could be easier for him, than to execute what he had resolved upon. With him, wealth constituted might, right, and justice.

"I may as well," he thought, pursuing his his reflections, "see her at once, and inform her of her uncle's arrangements in regard to her."

And after summoning a servant, he ordered Viola to be informed of his desire for an interview.

Viola had not been ignorant of her uncle's designs regarding herself and Hans. She knew that her marriage

with her doughty cousin had been a favorite project with him ; it is not necessary to inform the reader, that she recoiled from such a prospect with disgust. Although she felt a proper interest in her cousin's well-doing, she could not forbear contrasting his awkward and inferior appearance, and his narrow, sordid mind with the noble bearing, and generous impulses of Bryan.

She felt that she would as soon wed an ogre as her cousin, Hans Van Kempen.

She obeyed the summons of the servant, and hastened to meet Hans.— She had long desired an interview, for she knew nothing of her uncle's arrangements in regard to herself, and felt a natural anxiety upon that subject. She supposed that Hans desired to see her in relation to her own affairs.

The new proprietor of Van Kempen's Castle, received her very graciously, yet with a ludicrous dignity. He very politely conducted her to a seat, and assumed all the airs that could show him as the conscious proprietor of the establishment.

Viola knew her cousin's character and was not surprised at his foolishness. She accepted the seat appointed to her, with becoming gravity, and then calmly awaited the commencement of the conversation. Hans did not keep her long in waiting.

"Of course," he said, since the death of our uncle, there must be a new administration of affairs, and I suppose that you desire to know something concerning them."

"I do."

"You know that your fortune, left you by your mother, as well as the guardianship of your person, was entrusted to him?"

"To be sure."

"Well, before his death, he was pleased to appoint me as the guardian in his place, and the money is also with me."

"Indeed ! and by what right did my uncle make these arrangements without my consent?"

Viola was alarmed. Besides, she was indignant. She saw, at once, the advantages that Hans would thus obtain over her, and she knew him too well, not to fear him.

"Oh !" said the nephew, coldly, "he had an undoubted right to do so, as the attorney informed him. Without doubt, he was influenced by a desire to benefit you !"

"He ought, at least, to have consulted me."

"True ; but I hope you do not feel dissatisfaction at the appointment he has made. I hope I need not assure you that I will, in all things, be governed by your comfort and wishes."

Viola knew not what reply to make. She *was* dissatisfied, but upon a little reflection, she deemed it to be most prudent to keep it to herself ; she therefore said :

"I hope you will."

"Of course I will !" cried Hans, delighted with her seeming passiveness "You must know, Viola, that you are very dear to me. We have long been members of the same family, and—in—"

of a truth, Viola, I—I feel as if I ought to be—a—on very friendly terms !”

The rich blood mantled the girl's cheek. This was approaching a very disagreeable subject, a subject that she dreaded. She did not like the expression of her cousin's countenance, either ; for, as far as it was capable of expression, she saw that the hateful marriage project of her deceased uncle had met with favor at the hands of Hans.

“ We shall be near enough,” she said hastily, “ yet I should have thought that my uncle would have entrusted me with my own affairs ; I am sure that I am now of sufficient age.”

“ Of age enough, perhaps, but then you lack the judgment and experience necessary for its management.”

“ Indeed ! I can scarcely see wherein you have the advantage in respect to those qualifications.”

“ You forgot that your sex disqualifies you for the management of monetary affairs.”

“ Then a woman should know nothing of her own business.”

“ Not that, exactly ; but then, they should always have a guardian, a protector, if you please !”

And Hans attempted a smile.

“ And always in bondage !” returned Viola.

“ I hope, and indeed it is reasonable to hope, that you, like all other of the women of our land, will select for yourself a guardian who shall also be a companion,” continued Hans ; and with a sort of spasmodic motion he moved his chair nearer to the shrinking girl, and

attempted to look at her with an air of tenderness and regard. “ I do, Viola ; I *could* wish ; nay, I *do* wish, that I might direct your choice.”

“ Does that privilege pertain to your duty as guardian ?” asked the girl, with spirit.

“ No, but it pertains to the—af—the *love* I entertain for you !” stammered Hans, wiping the perspiration from his forehead.

Here was an avowal ! Plain enough too. Hans was in the field. Viola's worst fears were realised !

“ He does not love me,” she thought, “ he is incapable of love ; it is only his desire for more wealth, that induces his insincere avowal. I will treat him with the coldness he merits.”

“ Is that not a good foundation upon which to base my wish ?” asked Hans, seeing that she did not immediately reply.

“ This is no time for trifling ! I beg you would turn to some more agreeable subject !”

“ Trifling !” repeated Hans slowly, and with emphasis ; “ I assure you that I was never more in earnest. Is it possible, Viola, that you do not know that I love you, and that it was the darling wish of our dear uncle that we should marry ?”

The murder was at last out. Viola Fordham was not lacking in firmness or promptness. In a moment, she felt that it was better to meet the subject now than to defer it.

“ That's enough !” she said, as if fearing a tirade of tenderness and protestations. “ Say no more. Let me

tell you, Hans, that event *cannot* take place !”

Hans was astounded !

What could that foolish girl mean—to refuse him the Patroon of the manor of Van Kempen’s Castle, and that too without a moment’s reflection. She must be insane !

“You are hasty,” he said. “You need time for thought ; all our interests point that way.”

“I am not hasty,” replied Viola ; “I hope you will never refer to the subject again. I can *never* wed you !”

“Then I have been led into error,” Hans replied, not exactly comprehending what he said.

“It is not too late to get right,” said Viola, and with a somewhat distant adieu she left the room.

Hans was beat. For a long time he was incapable of connected thoughts, for his vanity, his confidence, and his love, of gold, were all wounded.—Finally, he struck his thigh a violent blow, and he exclaimed, with great energy :—

“I see it all ! It is that cursed foundling that obstructs my path.—Nature has been more generous with him than with me, and Viola loves him ! Ah I can settle this matter. I am not to be foiled by this nameless adventurer that is indebted to charity for an existence. I know that women are pleased with handsome men, and my cousin doubtless thinks that her wealth will answer for both. I will attend to this business in person. I will drive Bryan Blonday from the settlement, and then Viola may recover her reason !”

The young Patroon was *fairly* aroused. It was indeed ridiculous, if he, with all his wealth, was not a match for Bryan, especially in the matter of a lady’s hand.

Viola returned to her apartment, rejoicing that the interview had terminated. It seemed to her that all would be sunshine thenceforward, for Hans would think no more of her, as she had positively forbid all hope.

This was a comfortable conclusion, but alas ! a poor one. Hans Van Kempen was no despicable enemy.

A combination of interests, more than any promptings of generous or susceptible nature, caused him to love his cousin.

CHAPTER III.

THE SECRET WATCH.

EARLY in the morning of the day mentioned in the last chapter, Bryan Blonday left his inviting bed, in the neat cottage of Fielding, and without an object, and reflecting upon the beauties of his mistress, strolled toward the more compact portion of the settlement.

In his walk, he met Carl Knipper, the servant at the castle, and the one whom we have alluded to as Bryan’s confidant.

Carl was a square-built, hardy-framed, red-faced, shrewd, generous-hearted Dutchman, most devotedly attached to Blonday, and to the lovely Viola Fordham. He knew of their mutual attachment, and by his ingenuity and faithfulness had often enabled them to meet without the knowledge

of Abram He had also been the ship for you," said Carl, with an impressive gesture. "In what can I assist you?"

He had also been the bearer of many little notes between them; and he very justly regarded himself as one deeply interested in Bryan's welfare.

Carl was considerably past fifty years of age, and a widower, yet he took a deep interest in all love matters.

"There is no impediment now," he muttered: "Van Kempen the elder is bestowed in the grave, and Hans cares no more for his cousin than he does for his swine."

"Good morning, Carl," he cried to his friend, "Where away so early?"

"Good morning, Master Bryan," replied Carl, coming to a full halt, and removing a short, black pipe, his constant companion, from his mouth. "I have been to the river to look after my lines!"

"And what luck, Carl?"

"*Donder!* none at all."

Carl was a keen sportsman, and above all things delighted in Isaac Walton's pastime.

"Rather early for the fish, is it not?" Bryan observed, "You are not usually unfortunate."

"It is early," said Carl, "but then the weather is unusually fine, and I desired to try my luck."

"Carl," said Bryan, earnestly, "I am in need of your assistance once more. Can I count upon you?"

"To be sure you can, Master Bryan; why do you ask me?"

"I did not know but you had changed your views. These are changing times, Carl; didn't you know it?"

"I shall never change in my friend-

"I desire to see Viola."

Carl smiled.

"Will you inform her?" Bryan continued. "Ask her to meet me in the little grove by the river bank, where we have met before. Will you do me this favor?"

"To be sure I will."

"And can you let me know her determination?"

"Yes. When shall she meet you?"

"Oh! at night, when the moon is up."

"Well, then, if you pass the north gate of the wall, and find a red cloth suspended from it, she will meet you."

"The old signal; eh, Carl?"

"Yes, I have preserved it, though for the matter of that it has been but little in service lately. To tell you the truth, I was afraid you had deserted the pretty Viola."

"Pshaw! Carl. Don't you know that I never desert my friends. I am truer-hearted than that would seem."

"I never doubted your heart," said Carl; "but then you know love will not endure for ever, especially when it is always thwarted and opposed. I have tried it, Master Bryan."

"Indeed!" said Bryan, turning to depart. "Don't forget the signal, Carl, for I shall pass the north gate in the afternoon."

"I will not forget it, if there is any occasion for it. Something unforeseen by us may prevent her consent."

“Then hang out a white signal instead of a red one,” said Bryan. “In this way I shall avoid suspense and uncertainty.”

“A good idea!” cried Carl. “I will do so.”

And Bryan continued his walk towards the inn of Van Kempen’s castle, and Carl Knipper walked leisurely toward Van Kempen’s mansion. A smile wreathed his ruddy lips.

“Ah! my God,” he muttered, reverently closing his eyes, and elevating his hands; “if my master, Hans, was a *gentleman* like that gallant Bryan, it would be a pleasure to serve him. Won’t he make a husband for the proud Viola—proud and good!

The keeper of the tavern here spoken of, was another of Bryan’s friends.—Peter Schnapps, for that was the publican’s name, was perfectly independent of the Van Kempen interest, for he was the owner of the house and lot, and, as was his pompous boast, owed no man a penny. Like Carl Knipper, he was a Dutchman, honest, obliging and careful, and in the pursuance of his vocation, was the possessor of a flourishing trade. He was a Whig, a firm and decided one, though, like many others, the force of circumstances compelled him to be quiet.

Bryan’s gentlemanly bearing, and above all his sentiments, and his eloquent, bold, and such undisguised manner of asserting them, had strongly attached the inn-keeper to his interests: and he often swore most lustily, that the Foundling of the Mohawk, would become *the* great man of the settlement.

Toward the inn, which was a commodious double mansion, built of logs, Bryan pursued his walk, as we have said. His mind was full of Viola Fordham, and the delights of his future interview, and he paid no attention to his whereabouts until the voice of Peter Schnapps sounded in his ears. Then he turned and saw the publican standing in the door of the inn.

“Are you the man to pass your old friends without a word, Bryan Blonday,” Peter cried.

Thus addressed, Bryan shook off his reverie, and said:

“Indeed, good Peter, I had forgotten myself. I had intended to visit you, but was about passing your door so intent was I in thinking of other matters.”

“Well, come in then. I have wished for you many a time these few days past, for a strange gentleman has made a great many inquiries about you—a very great many.”

“A *strange gentleman*?” said Bryan. “Who could it be, Peter? I am sure that I am not known out of the settlement.”

“He was an attorney,” said Peter, “a curious man, indeed. He had been to visit the will of old Van Kempen!”

“Did you learn his name?”

“Fizzle.”

“And what did he want of me?”

“Come in, and then I will tell you all.”

Bryan entered the inn, and seated himself. Peter also took a chair, and when he had composed his limbs to his

liking, he said

"You see, after this lawyer had made old Abram's will, he came down to my house, and stayed several days. He was the most inquisitive man I ever knew. He almost blinded me with questions. He wanted the history of every man in the place, and woman too. He gleaned all the particulars of Van Kempen's marriage, and finally desired a full history of your own life."

"But how knew he ought of me?" asked Bryan, with some considerable trepidation.

"Oh, you were spoken of as a great Whig, and the only one in the settlement who dare oppose the Van Kempens. After he had heard this, he inquired all about you!"

"Was he a Whig?"

"That's what no one could discover, but I believe he was."

"Where is he now?"

"Returned to Albany; but he will be here again in a few days."

"And for what object?"

"He says he designs to settle in this region."

"He must be a singular man."

"Didn't I say that he was? He is a *keen* one though, I warrant you. If it should turn out that he *was* a Whig, he would be a great help to us in this Tory region."

"True. When he *does* return, inform me of it. I am at loss to know in what way he can be interested in me."

"I will let you know, indeed I will," cried Schnapps. I persuaded him to go to the cottage and see you, but he

declined, saying that he should have another opportunity before long."

As Peter had unfolded his budget, Bryan returned to the cottage for his breakfast. During the meal he was silent and thoughtful, his mind being filled with speculations regarding the stranger.

It was a long and tedious morning to Bryan, notwithstanding the beauties that surrounded him. The winter, long and gloomy in these latitudes, had disappeared, and bright and balmy spring had asserted its domain. The hues of early vegetation were emitting their fragrant perfume, the waters glanced brightly in the sun, and the birds of that clime had returned to their wonted haunts.

"Will she meet me?"

This question he asked himself a thousand times.

"Will she meet me?"

And he would watch the sun, and exclaim against the tardiness of his movements.

He was restless, irritable and discontented. He moved from place to place without an object, but no sooner had he gained a position, than he desired another.

No situation is perhaps so unpleasant as an ardent lover waiting for an interview with the idol of his heart.

The sun eventually declined westward. With eager steps Bryan bounded from the little lawn, and hastened toward the northern wall of the castle fence. As soon as he could discern the gate, he saw that a red cloth was fluttering from a post.

He clasped his hands, and exclaimed :

“ She *will* meet me !”

This was a delightful relief to his excited feelings.

“ She *will* meet me, and I am happy !”

And he returned to his home, to await the further flight of time in the solitude of his own chamber. His head was so full of rejoicing, that he could not tolerate society.

Seated at the little table by his bedside, he amused himself, and whiled away his time in examining the little keepsakes that Viola had given him, and in re-reading her billets, which he had already perused a thousand times. After all, he was able to discover new beauties in both the language and chirography.

Soon after Bryan had quitted the north wall, Hans Van Kempen emerged from the gate, intent upon a stroll beside the river. Like Bryan Blonday, he too, was in love !

The heart of the Patroon was agitated by several passions. He was a little sad, some angry, and immensely jealous.

His eye caught the red cloth.

“ What the devil does this mean !” cried he, gazing at it.

It perplexed him sorely. Any little incident in the least mysterious will aggravate a jealous man.

“ I see,” he said after a little reflection. “ Some d—d Whig has placed it there as a mark of contempt for the flag of England. I have it, it is the work of that rascal, Bryan Blonday !”

Of course, let the mischief be what it may, a jealous man always attributes it to his rival.

With very unamiable feelings Hans Van Kempen took the cloth from the gate, and as he was rending it into innumerable shreds, he exclaimed :

“ Ah ! that cursed Bryan Blonday ! Would that I could tear his heart in the same manner !”

After the signal was demolished, the rage of the Patroon cooled. He threw the fragments upon the ground, and then pursued his walk.

Hans indulged in a long reflection upon the banks of the river. He resolved in his mind a hundred plans for the removal of his rival, but none of them seemed likely to effect his purposes.

“ Curse him !” he exclaimed, “ but for his handsome face, and bold address, Viola Fordham would be mine without an effort. Aye ! and so would her fortune.”

Hans turned to go home. As he approached the gate, he saw the fragments of the signal upon the ground, and once more his thoughts reverted to it, and the manner in which he discovered it.

“ It is mysterious,” he muttered.— “ If any one had desired to insult me, they would have placed the emblem where I would most likely discover it. This rag might have fluttered unobserved a hundred years, but for the merest accident. What can it mean ?”

And in a moment the Patroon was seated upon the grass in a brown study.

"I have it!" he cried at length, *umping up* under the influence of some powerful excitement. "I have them now! By G—d it is a signal! I'll sift this matter to the bottom!"

And Hans opened the gate, and ran up the yard like a furious madman.

Near the entrance to the mansion he discovered Carl Knipper. He instantaneously halted and called him.

"Carl Knipper, come hither,"

Carl slowly approached.

"Listen to me," said Hans endeavoring to appear calm. "Tell me the truth, too, if you value your ears."

Carl was as calm as a moonbeam.

"Do you know aught of a red cloth appended to a gate?"

Carl was cool. Not a muscle moved.

"Yes," he answered promptly.

"What does it mean? Who placed it there?"

"I did," replied Carl.

"For what purpose?"

"As a signal."

"Well, go on! What the devil do you stop for!" exclaimed Hans, almost bursting with impatience.

"As a signal for Peter Schnapps," answered the servant, who had only hesitated in order to think of an excuse.

"And what are you exchanging signals with Peter Schnapps for?"

"To tell him that I would go on a fishing voyage to-night," answered Carl.

"The devil!" exclaimed Hans, and retreated to his own room, fully believing the assertion of his servant.

Carl was a diplomatist. He had lied lustily, but he had lied in character, and he succeeded.

"More moonshine after all," exclaimed Hans, throwing himself into a great chair, that had been his uncle's favorite. "Oh! if it had been the work of that Bryan, or a signal between him and Viola, it should have cost his life."

And this reflection consoled the Patroon.

"I will watch Viola," he exclaimed. In the most silent and secret manner I will keep a strict watch upon all her movements. Let me once detect her in a correspondence with the Foundling, and by the God that made me, it shall fare ill with her."

Carl returned to the kitchen immediately after the departure of his master, and with the society of his short black pipe, he chuckled over the success of his falsehood.

"It will do," Carl would mutter. "Let the poor young people meet. It is not right for Master Hans to interfere."

The first beams of the bright April moon found Bryan Blonday seated in the little grove where he had appointed to meet Viola. A few feet from him flowed the tranquil river, soothing the excitement of his mind by its low and gentle murmur.

"She will come," he thought, "Viola is true to her word. A few moments more and she will be beside me."

But Bryan was kept a long time in waiting. Indeed, his patience was most severely tried, and once or twice nopes entirely deserted him. Then he would remember the earnestness of

Viola's love, and his spirits would at once rise, and he exclaim :

"She will be here! I would risk my life upon her faithfulness."

It was a long time before Viola could leave the precincts of the Castle unobserved. The housekeeper must be avoided, the servants shunned, and a dozen little perplexities surmounted, but at last she avoided them all, and closely muffled in her shawl, she tripped lightly down the lawn, toward the northern gate.

The faithful Carl was there to let her out.

"Now I will remain here," he said, "until you return. If there is anything occurring I will whistle, and then you must remain within the shelter of the grove, and on no account make your appearance. You can easily hear me."

Viola thanked the faithful old man for his ingenuity, and then hastened toward the grove. Bryan heard her light and rapid footfall, and the blood rushed swiftly through his veins.

"I was right," he thought. "Viola is coming."

In a few moments she was folded in his arms!

"Ah! dearest," exclaimed Bryan, when his excitement had somewhat subsided, "this is indeed a bliss and a faithfulness that more completely endears you to me. When shall we meet thus, to part no more whilst life remains?"

"Alas!" said Viola, I know not."

"But surely," urged Bryan somewhat vehemently, "the death of your

uncle has left you free to act as you choose?"

"No."

"And why?"

"He has appointed another guardian."

The countenance of the youth fell.

"Is it possible," he exclaimed, "the malignity of that man will pursue me after his death!"

"Alas!" said Viola, "I am no more my own master now than during his life."

"But who is your new guardian?"

"Hans, my cousin."

"Great God!" exclaimed Bryan. "But why do I speak. He could not legally depute the trust confided by your mother to him. It is but a mockery, and of no obligation whatever."

"But Hans avers to the contrary."

"Hans lies!" cried the youth. "It cannot be. It is but a device of his own, and for his own purposes. Believe him not but trust to me, I will not deceive you."

"But you may be deceived yourself."

"Impossible. I know that I am right."

"Would that it were so," replied Viola. "I dread the power of my cousin Hans, and he has already proposed himself as my husband. I trust, however, that he will no further urge his suit."

Bryan was alarmed. He thought of the wealth of the young Patroon, of his powerful interest, and he knew him to be most unscrupulous. He

gazed into the face of his mistress with a sorrowful expression. He was truly despondent.

"Why are you so sad?" asked Viola.

"Have I not enough to make me sad?" said Bryan. "In wealth and power I am no match for your cousin, and if he has earnestly proposed to you, you may rest assured that he will not tamely give you up."

"But dearest, I promptly and determinedly refused him. I told him that our union could never take place."

"No matter for that, it will only stimulate his efforts. Hans hates me. He will pursue you in order to pain me, if for no other reason. I know him, and am confident that he will endeavor to compel you to the alliance that he desires. He does not care for your love. He only desires success and the possession of your wealth."

"But surely, Bryan, you do not distrust me! Do you suppose that I can be forced to wed a man I dislike? Hans Van Kempen does not attempt the thing!"

Bryan was about to reply, but a shrill whistle from the gate attracted his attention.

"There is danger abroad!" exclaimed Viola, in alarm. "It is the signal of the faithful Carl Knipper!"

"What danger?" asked Bryan.

"Something that requires caution at our hands. Let us remove farther within the shadow of the grove!"

Bryan complied with the request, and the lovers seated themselves upon the very brink of the river bank.

CHAPTER IV

STAR GAZING.

MRS. NAOMI BILLIOUS, a maiden lady of some fifty long, unmarried, and unwooed years, was the housekeeper, or general superintendant of the female department of Van Kempen's castle. She had been inducted by Abram, and the kitchen sceptre duly placed into her hands, several years before this period, and for a long time the neighbors and servants supposed her to be the very goodness of good nature, affability and kindness. She was a prudent, careful manager, and very attentive to the wants and interests of her employer.

The fact was, the old damsel was making a most desperate effort to entrap Abram in the net matrimonial, and the virtues that she practiced, were only assumed for her especial purposes.

There is no parallel to the perseverance and patience of an old maid, whose hook is baited for a matrimonial victim! No art, that promises the most faint hopes of success, is neglected; no means, however unscrupulous or indelicate, are passed over. Night and day, morning and evening, the brain is racked, and the ingenuity strained, to ensure success.

But even the patience of an old maid cannot endure forever. Naomi Billious exhausted all the arts known to women of her class, and even invented new ones—but it was useless. Abram Van Kempen, the ungrateful dog, was both blind and deaf to all her excellencies. He never bestowed even a smile upon her

Naomi eventually gave up in despair. With a proud curl of her lip, and a disdainful toss of her head, she quoted the hackneyed lines—

“Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

And then she mentally swore an awful vengeance upon all mankind that came within her reach.

As if by magic, the gentle, quiet housekeeper, was transformed into a vixen, a shrew, a she-wolf, a walking, talking, breathing, palpable vinegar cruets!

Did you never observe, gentle reader, how bitterly, how relentlessly, an ugly and withered old maid hates every thing beautiful? They detest the sunlight, the bright flowers, the lovely landscape, but, above all things earthly, they hate a lovely woman, more especially if she be young!

Viola Fordham, the lovely Viola, was the bane, the curse, the wormwood, of Naomi's existence. She could not bear the light, the love-light, that beamed from her eyes, and she despised the bloom upon her smooth round cheek. The malignity pervaded her whole heart, and she had often hoped that some pestilence, or some dispensation of Providence, might throw an enduring blight on her charms!

Luckily, for the better portion of God's creation, the prayers of our old spinsters ascend but a short distance.

An hour, or thereabouts, after the departure of Viola, for the purpose of meeting Bryan, Hans entered the kitchen, where Miss Naomi was seated in state. Sarah Fielding, the daugh-

ter of Bryan's kind-hearted protector, was sitting near her, engaged in reading. Sarah was Viola's assistant and companion, and to her Hans addressed himself.

“Where is your mistress?”

“In her room, I suppose,” replied Sarah.

The servant did not know of the departure of her mistress.

“She is not there!” said Hans, sternly. “I visited her room but a few moments ago, and it was locked.”

“Perhaps she was in it.”

“She did not answer my summons.”

“I know not where she is.”

Naomi threw up her spectacles, and placed her arms a-kimbo. With her these movements were always indicative of mental excitement, and usually preceded a speech.

“It is nothing to me, of course;” she said, “but the blessed lord only knows what will become of the young lady, now that her guardian is removed. It does seem that she is bent upon destruction!”

“Have you seen her this evening?” asked Hans.

“I have not. She is—but no matter—it is not for me to say—I ought not—but no matter—ah!”

And the spectacles were energetically pulled down over her nose, and her head commenced a swaying motion.

“If you know where she is, or if you have any suspicion where I may find her, speak out, for I desire to see her!”

“I am sure I don't know!” replied

Naomi, and she hummed a tune in a monotonous voice.

Hans left the kitchen.

"I will find her;" he said. "I more than mistrust that she is at some place in the society of Bryan."

And he walked down the yard, toward the northern gate, peering into every bush and grove as he passed.

Carl Knipper discovered him, and, as he had promised Viola, he whistled.

Then he busied himself about the gate, and was apparently absorbed in some intricate unravelment of lines and ropes when Hans approached him.

"What are you doing at the gate?" asked Hans.

"Waiting for Peter Schnapps!" replied Carl, continuing his employment with renewed dilligence.

"Yes, I had forgotten. Have you seen Viola to-night?"

"I did."

"And where?"

"In the hall, at the castle.

"Has she not passed this way?"

"No."

Open the gate, and let me pass out."

Carl threw open the gate, and the Patroon passed on in the direction of the settlement.

"I will find Bryan Blonday," he said.

And full of this determination, he passed on to the village, and entered the tavern, the shops, and the stores, in search of Bryan Blonday.

But he could not find his rival.

Two hours flew on rapidly over the heads of the lovers, seated in the grove

It befits not our purpose to detail their conversation, but when they were admonished to part, by the lateness of the hour, they did so, with renewed protestations of eternal love. Many times did the delighted young man press his fair companion to his bosom and many times did his lips meet hers in impassioned kisses.

At last they parted. Byran returned homeward with a lingering step, and Viola hastened to the gate. Carl admitted her, and advised her to hie to her room with all haste, as the young Patroon had gone to the village, and would undoubtedly return in a short time.

The girl needed no second bidding. She ran up the yard with eager footsteps, but just as she was passing a bunch of bushes near the castle, a rude hand was laid upon her shoulder, and the voice of her cousin thus addressing, startled her:

"Wait a moment Viola—why such haste? This is a beautiful evening, and I would converse with you, a few moments, in this bright moonlight. Where have you been?"

Hans had returned from the village, and gained the grounds of the castle by another gate than the one Carl guarded.

Viola was really terrified at the sudden appearance of Hans, as well as by the fierce, revengeful look his countenance assumed. She hardly knew what reply to make to his question, but she stammered at a venture.

"I have only been out for a stroll, and I beg of you to release me. It is late, and I would retire"

“Truly! Am I not worthy of a moment’s consideration? If it were Bryan Blonday, think you you would be in such a haste?”

And Hans peered into her face with a most malicious sneer, still retaining a hold upon her arm.

“Shame upon you, Hans Van Kempen!” exclaimed the maiden. “Release me, for I will not tarry with one that can so easily forget his manhood! Release me, I say!”

“Nay, listen!” said Hans, somewhat abashed by the firm words of his cousin, and her stinging rebuke—“listen to me—for disguise, and this offended air, will not avail you. I know all.”

“All of what?”

“You love Bryan Blonday, and for his sake you refused me! I repeat it, you love Bryan!”

“And if I do?” cried the maiden sharply, coloring to the very temples. “What then?”

“And you have met him this night!”

Viola was astounded. She could only articulate:

“Eavesdropper!”

Her tone was expressive of the deepest scorn.

“Beware, girl!” cried Hans, grasping her arm until the pain caused her to cry out. “Beware, I say, or I will crush Bryan Blonday. From your childhood you were destined for my bride, and I will not surrender you to a renegade, a nameless, houseless, wandering vagabond, who is indebted to my forbearance for his existence!”

We have said that Viola was a girl

of spirit. These opprobrious epithets, bestowed upon one to whom she had just plighted her heart, hand, and adherence, and whose parting kiss was yet warm upon her lips, aroused her whole soul

With a desperate effort, she threw off her cousin’s grasp, and drawing her fine form up to its full height, she exclaimed:

“Leave me, ruffian! or I will call the servants. For Bryan, who is absent, I scorn your base slanders, as I scorn the one that utters them. You are worthy of no other reply!”

And, with the stateliness of a queen, she moved off in the direction of the castle.

Hans was left standing beside the bushes that had concealed him, rage, shame, and a desire for vengeance, rivetting him to the spot.

Viola entered the castle, and hastened to her room. As soon as she had displaced her shawl, and seated herself, the faithful Sarah entered, and exclaimed:

“I am so glad you have returned!—Master Hans has searched the castle for you, and I was fearful he would find you!”

“He did find me, Sarah!”

“Alas!” cried the girl.

“Cease your foolish fears. I do not fear Hans Van Kempen. I possess quite as much spirit as he does!”

“But Bryan——”

“For shame, Sarah! Is Bryan Blonday a coward?”

“But you forget—Hans is rich and powerful!”

“No matter for that—Bryan is proud, generous and noble, and beside all that, he is a universal favorite with the people. My cousin, base as he may be, dare not harm him !”

Sarah was assured by the confident tone of Viola. She had been reared with Bryan, had been under the supervision of the same kind mother, and in fact, she regarded him as a brother. She knew of his attachment to Viola, and she ardently desired the success of his suit.

After the discourse had ended, both Viola and her maid retired to their beds.

A full half hour elapsed before Hans Van Kempen left his stand, the spot where he had encountered Viola. The first words that escaped from his excited bosom, were :

“It is all out now ! They have met this night, and are undoubtedly engaged. Will I not repay this proud and deceitful maiden for her scorn and deceit ?”

Hans left the place, the hateful place, where he had met with a second chilling repulse, and entered his home. He immediately retired to his room, and there he brooded in gloomy silence over the prospects of his hopeless love.

The more impossible a gratification seems, the more ardently do superficial and exciteable minds desire it. This was the case with Hans. If the desires that he entertained towards Viola could be called love, then was his passion increased by his rebuff, and the certainty of his rival's success. He felt that it was absolutely necessary

to take prompt steps in the matter, or, before he was aware, Bryan and Viola would be indissolubly united.

How should he move ? What should be done ? These were the subjects of his bitter reflection.

There was but one way to succeed with safety.

The lovers must be separated—effectually and really separated, and in such a manner that they could not possibly correspond.

Could he effect this ?

At all hazards, he must make the attempt.

He would remove Bryan. Viola he wanted near his own person, under the supervision of his own eyes.

Could he possibly force Bryan to leave the vicinity ? This was a very important question.

He knew that Bryan was possessed of most obstinate courage. He had, upon more than one occasion, witnessed exhibitions of it. Bryan might sneer at his attempts, and successfully bid defiance to his desires and his authority.

On the whole, and after a long debate with himself, he determined to resort to bribery and duplicity in the first place. If they failed, there would yet be time enough to resort to force.

“Am I not rich ?” he queried. “Can I better employ a small portion of my wealth than in the removal of my rival ? And then, if I succeed, will not my investment be richly repaid by securing the fortune of the haughty Viola Fordham ?”

Filled with such opinions, and re-

garding his conclusion as one of consummate cunning, he procured writing materials, and wrote the following note, directed to Bryan Blunday :

Van Kempen's Castle, April, 1777.

"If my old friend and school companion, Bryan Blunday, will visit me at my house this afternoon, he shall hear of something greatly to his advantage.

"HANS VAN KEMPEN."

"Most capital!" exclaimed Hans, as he read it over carefully. "A great idea. To-morrow morning I will send Carl with it, and to-morrow afternoon he will come. The note cannot fail to excite his interest. It is a grand idea!"

And Hans chuckled over his scheme.

"One thing more!" he said, after he had folded the note and directed it. "In what manner must I approach him? I must be careful about that, for he is a careful, susceptible fellow. I will defer consideration on that point, for I am weary."

And Hans retired to his repose.

Early in the morning Carl Knipper was sent off with the note, with careful instructions to place it in Bryan's own hands, and not trust it to the care of others.

"Shall I obtain an answer?"

"Of course."

And Carl dispatched.

"Now, the devil is in this, sure enough!" muttered Carl, when he had gained the lawn and was beyond the reach of hearing. "What has possessed my master, Hans, to write to Bryan Blunday? Is it a challenge, I

wonder? Would he dare to fight him?"

Carl was sorely puzzled. He pursued his way, however, and at the cottage of Edward Fielding he found Bryan.

The young man was standing upon the lawn when the messenger approached him.

"A note for you," said Carl, a demure smile overspreading his features as he extended the billet.

Bryan eagerly grasped it.

"From Viola?" he asked.

Before Carl replied, he had opened the paper, and as his eye glanced upon the name at the bottom, his fine face assumed an expression of disappointment. He shook his head, and said :

"Not from Viola, Carl!"

Bryan pursued the note.

"I am to take back an answer," said Carl.

"I will come!" said Bryan, 'though I am free to confess that this singular courtesy, and this suddenly awakened interest, somewhat surprises me. Yet you may say to Hans Van Kempen, that I will come. Perhaps I can get a glimpse at Viola by this means."

Carl returned, and reported the reply of Bryan to his master. Hans received it with delight.

"I wonder," he said, when the servant left him alone, "why this plan has never suggested itself before. It can hardly fail of success, for Bryan must be aware that he is burthensome to Fielding, and he must also enter

tain a desire to move for himself in some higher sphere—some situation that holds out a prospect of honor and reward !”

Hans was no mean judge of the impulses, thoughts, and desires of the heart. With most men, he would have succeeded in his schemes, for they were well laid, and deep.

All the morning he spent in arranging his plan of attack upon Bryan. He eventually fixed his purpose, and sat himself down, impatiently awaiting the arrival of his guest.

Now that he had finally resolved, he was in the greatest possible haste to execute.

The afternoon was somewhat advanced before Bryan appeared at the castle. The moment he did, however, he was conducted to the apartment of Hans. On his way thither, he looked about him in every direction to discover Viola, but he did not see her.

Hans was all smiles when his old “school-fellow” entered the room. He presented him a chair, and was most particular in the attentions that he paid him. Bryan accepted of his civilities with the utmost good-breeding, but more than once he fixed his dark eye keenly upon the dissembler.

“I have come at your request,” he said, when they were alone and both seated ; “may I beg of you to make your business known at once ?”

“To be sure,” said Hans, delighted with the early recurrence to business. “I *did* send for you, for I had begun to think that you would never visit me of your own choice.”

“It is quite probable that I never should,” replied Bryan, promptly.

“And may I ask the cause of this coldness toward an old friend and early companion ?”

“For some years past, your uncle, from some cause that I never ascertained, regarded me with a great dislike. I supposed this had descended from him to you, for you have treated me coldly, and I am not the man that wishes to intrude upon any man’s hospitality.”

“You are entirely wrong,” said Hans, “entirely wrong, with regard to myself ; and indeed you do my uncle injustice. He was a singular man, Bryan, and he took some umbrage at your political sentiments.—For my part, I always regarded your Whig sympathies as a boyish whim, that interest and more mature years would dissipate. In his dying hour, my uncle enjoined it upon me to immediately assist you in some useful career ; for that purpose I sent for you to-day !”

Bryan bowed, in token of his acknowledgements.

I have a proposition to make to you,” pursued Hans, “and one that cannot fail to meet your approbation. I am sure.”

“I will hear it,” said Bryan

“Both my wealth, and my influence in the proper quarter, places it in my power to procure you a captain’s commission in the British army. This is a splendid opening for a young man, such a one, in fact, as does not often occur.”

Hans paused to witness the effect of his offer.

Bryan was silent.

"What do you think of it?" asked Hans.

"For your proffer of assistance, I thank you," replied Bryan; but I *did* think you knew me too well to make me such a proposition. We have been too long acquainted."

"How mean you?"

"I mean that *I am a Whig*—a thorough Whig, wedded heart and soul to this rebellion, as you call it, and I would despise the service of the British monarch!"

"Really?"

"Yes, truly! and if we both live, Hans Van Kempen, you will find that it is not a '*boyish whim*!'"

Hans was disconcerted—thrown out. He had not thought it possible that Bryan could refuse his offer.

"I am disappointed," he said.

"It is your own fault."

"I shall not be particular with a friend," said Hans, determined not to surrender for one repulse; "I will establish you in the mercantile line in New York."

"Hear me!" said Bryan, emphatically. "I repeat that I am grateful to yourself and your uncle for your good intentions towards me, but I decline your assistance entirely. My own good arms are sufficient to sustain me, and when they fail, let me perish."

"You surely do not mean to spurn my offers?"

"Not *spurn* them, but decline them."

"And you will receive *no* assistance?"

"Not a penny!"

"You are a singular man!"

"Quite so. Permit me to bid you a good day."

And Bryan departed, thus abruptly terminating the interview.

Hans was defeated.

"D—m his pride!" he cried, as the retreating footsteps of his "old friend" ceased to echo upon his ear. "It shall be humbled! By the gods, he spurns not only my offers, but my person, and leaves the house as if there was contamination in the atmosphere!"

Rules that would apply to common men, were totally inapplicable to the proud and lofty soul of Bryan Blouday!

Hans had mistaken his man.

"Force must decide it after all!" said the Patroon. "I am not to be moved from my purpose!"

How should he apply his power.

This was the question, brought about by the new phase of affairs.—Hans sat down to reflect upon it.

CHAPTER V.

A ROYAL EDICT.

"Curse his impudence!" cried Bryan, continuing his way home.—"Did he suppose he could deceive me? Did he think me so base as to accept of a pension, to resign my claim and pretensions to the hand of Viola, for a sum of his base gold?"

The young man was indignant.

Arrived at the cottage, he seated

himself upon the lawn, within the shelter of a lilac bush. His mind was full of unpleasant thoughts, for, though brave to a fault, he dreaded the machinations of Hans.

"It is indeed high time," he said, speaking his reflections; "that I had entered upon a career. I feel that this comparative idleness is unworthy of me, especially in such a time as this. Every soldier counts for his country now, and beside that, fame may be had with proper efforts. As for the gold that Hans worships, I despise it!"

Whilst Bryan's mind was thus agitated, his rival was plunged in the intricacies of dark thoughts. After a long reflection, he called Carl to his presence once more.

Carl came.

"See Edward Fielding at once," said Hans, "and inform him that I require his presence immediately."

Carl bowed, and departed in search of Fielding.

"If he continues to harbor this cur," muttered Hans, "he must seek for a new home?"

Fielding was easily found, and he had hastened to obey the summons of his new landlord.

"Sit down," said Hans, when he entered his presence. "I wish to converse with you about Bryan Blonday."

Fielding knew that a mutual dislike existed between Bryan and his landlord, and his mind was at once filled with forebodings. These fears seemed to assure him that something was wrong.

"I will listen," he said.

Hans felt that the subject was a delicate one to approach, and he manifested some trepidation. Fielding observed it, and said:

"I hope you are not displeased with Bryan!"

"I *am* displeased with him," replied Hans, "and well I may be, for he is a headstrong and obstinate fool. I have made him offers this day that would have turned the head of any man in the settlement with joy, and he refused them in an insulting manner!"

"Indeed!"

"It is the truth!"

And Hans enumerated and repeated his offers to Bryan.

Fielding was thoughtful.

"Now," said Hans, "I call upon you to exact your influence with him, and if need be, your authority."

Fielding well knew that Bryan would never accept a king's commission; and he knew also that his tastes and disposition were averse to a mercantile life. He felt, therefore, that it would be idle for him to interfere, and he expressed as much to Hans.

"Then he is above your authority?"

"I feel that he is, in this matter."

"Then turn the ungrateful villain off at once!"

"What! drive him from his home!"

"Aye!"

"That I will never do!"

"Then I will drive you off. I am determined to take a bold stand for the king's interest; indeed, it is my duty to do so. This Bryan Blonday is, and for a long time has been, a mischievous and officious Whig, and his presence is detrimental and dangerous to the

peace of the settlement. I am determined that he shall accept my offers, which are generous, or seek a new sphere for the commission of treason?"

"With me," said Fielding, firmly, "you may do as you please. I have long been a faithful servant of your uncle's, and would cheerfully serve you. You may be certain, however, that I shall never drive Bryan away, under any circumstances."

"Do not be hasty," cried Hans; "take time for reflection. You are an old man, and this is a serious matter. Of this you may be assured—you shall either compel Bryan to accept of my terms, turn him off, or surrender your situation and your cottage. You may have three days for consideration."

"As you please," said Fielding in a sorrowful tone. "There is no need for reflection. I am already determined. I confess it would be a hardship for me to leave my house, for, as you say, I am an old man. Yet for all, I will not turn Bryan Blonday away."

"Then you may consider yourself discharged from my employment. I am not to be trifled with!"

Fielding made no remonstrance, but left the room. As he was closing the door behind him, Hans continued:

"You had better be advised. This obstinacy is only encouraging Bryan in habits of idleness and disobedience."

Fielding continued his retreat, and returned home with a heavy heart.— On his road, a few tears escaped him.

No sooner had he entered his lovely cottage, than the kind-hearted and

anxious wife observed his sadness.— Bryan, also, was alarmed at his sorrowful and dejected look.

The laborer was instantly plied with questions, touching the cause of his unusual grief.

"Cause enough!" he repeated.— "It is no light matter for one of my age and habits to be driven upon the world, to seek a new home, after my frame is exhausted and my energies subdued."

"What mean you?" eagerly asked Bryan.

"Do explain yourself," said the wife.

"I mean what I say? I must leave the cottage!"

"Who says that?" asked Bryan.

"Hans Van Kempen."

"I thought as much; now tell the reasons."

Fielding told all.

Bryan hung down his head, and was silent for a few moments, but he soon arose from his chair and seized his cap.

"Where to?" asked Fielding.

"I will be back in a moment," he replied, and he left the cottage and hastened toward the little inn.

Luckily for Bryan's purpose, he found Peter Schnapps alone.

"Peter!" said the excited youth, "I have come to solicit a favor."

"And you could not have come to a more willing friend."

"I would tarry with you a few days."

"Forever, if you like."

Bryan turned to depart. Peter cried out:

"Why this haste, Bryan Blonday?"

Explain yourself to me. Tell me what has occurred."

Bryan felt that an explanation was due to his kind-hearted friend, and he returned and told him all.

"D—n the villain!" exclaimed the inn-keeper, "he deserves to be hung, drawn, and quartered!"

Bryan returned to the cottage. He approached the weeping matron, and said:

"Now, mother, arrange my little wardrobe. I am ready to depart.—Sooner than permit harm to come to you, who have been so kind to me, I will forfeit my life. In this affair Hans Van Kempen has proved too strong for me, and assailed me in a tender point, but by the God that made us, a day of retribution will come!"

"You shall not go, Bryan," interposed Fielding. "I told the wretch that I would not drive you out, and I might have added, that I loved you as my own child."

"Seek not to deter me," said Bryan, firmly, though a tear added unusual brilliancy to his black eye, "I am resolved. You are utterly unable to buffet with the world, and in this region the influence of Hans would prevent me from sustaining you. It is no grievance for me to depart, except the loss of your society, for I have been thinking of it for some time past. Let me go, this will deprive Hans of a pretence for persecution. Have no fear, for we shall meet again."

Fielding could not restrain his tears, and his good wife sobbed on Bryan's shoulder.

It was a touching scene.

"Why leave us now," asked Fielding.

"There is no necessity for delay.—Hans will be the sooner pacified,"

"But you know not where to go."

"Yes, I have friends. For a day or two Peter Schnapps has kindly consented to receive me."

"Ah! Bryan! Bryan!" sobbed the matron.

"Do not go," urged Fielding.—"What will my home be without you? For a long time you have been its light and its joy. Do not leave it.—Together we will bid defiance to Hans Van Kempen, and the God of the poor man will sustain us."

Bryan was sensibly touched by this appeal. For a moment he seemed to hesitate, but it was only for a moment. Hastily brushing away a descending tear from his cheek, he said:

"It must not be. Your feelings have the mastery of your reason. It is better, far better, that I should go, yet think not that I desire to leave you—shall ever forget you. Get me my clothes, mother, for I would depart ere you completely unman me."

It was plain enough that Bryan meant to depart, and, indeed, a moment's serious thought convinced both Fielding and his wife that it was better for him to do so. Yet their hearts were heavy, for the youth was very dear to them.

Mrs. Fielding carefully packed up his little wardrobe. Then he bade them a warm and affectionate adieu,

and with a swelling heart and tearful eyes, sought the inn once more.

For a long time after his departure his aged guardians wept in silence, and prayed for his prosperity.

"May the devil seize this Hans Van Kempen!" exclaimed Peter Schnapps, who was yet alone in his bar-room when Bryan returned. "Now we shall have a terrible time, I have no doubt. Many rejoiced when Abram died, but I doubt if they have bettered themselves by a change of landlords. This young one commences business with a high hand!"

"Let him improve his hour, Peter," replied Bryan. "Let him exert his authority while he may—but mark me! a time is coming when himself shall be the supplicant for our mercy."

"I hope so! God knows I desire it!" replied Peter. "But tell me why he should thus single you out for his first victim?"

"For political reasons, undoubtedly," replied Bryan, yet he blushed for the innocent falsehood.

"Then we may all expect proscription."

"Certainly."

Peter Schnapps was thoughtful.

Bryan was sad.

Hans Van Kampen, intent upon the fulfillment of his intentions, kept an exact account of the time after his interview with Fielding. When the three days that had been allowed for deliberation had expired, he again sent to Carl to request the laborer's attendance at the Castle.

Fielding had partially recovered from the keenness of his grief at the

loss of Bryan's society when he received the summons, but in his heart a feeling of utter detestation for his landlord had taken deep root. As soon as he entered the audience room, Hans was struck with the look of subdued melancholy that the old man's countenance wore.

"Well, Fielding," he said, "the time to which you were limited respecting your determination about Bryan Blonday has expired, and I have sent for you to learn your final conclusions."

"Bryan is not an inmate of my dwelling," said Fielding, with difficulty controlling his emotions.

The countenance of Hans brightened.

"Then you have driven him out?" he exclaimed.

"I scorn a falsehood, even to conciliate your favor," replied the laborer. "I did not drive him out."

"Then why did he leave?"

"That you might not persecute me for his sake."

Hans withered under this reply. It was a stinging rebuke to his despicable meanness!

"Where has he gone?" he asked.

"At present he tarries with his friend, Peter Schnapps. What his future intentions are I know not."

"That will do," replied Hans hastily.

Fielding left the audience-room.

"D—n this Peter Schnapps!" exclaimed Hans. "He too, is a Whig, although he is cautious about expressing his sentiments. What will it avail me if this Bryan remains in the settle-

ment. Undoubtedly, Peter will shelter him, and he owns his own domicil, and is otherwise independent. Peter Schnapps must be reached, as in fact must every Whig in the settlement. I will not be thwarted, and Bryan Blonday shall be exiled!"

The bitter malignity of little minds often transcends our belief.

More plans must be laid, more plotting set on foot, in order to accomplish the Patroon's darling object.

The mind of Hans was fertile in mischief.

The morning following the visit of Fielding to the Castle, was the Sabbath, and as usual, the whole settlement, and the few residents of the surrounding country, were assembled at an early hour for attendance upon the forms of worship.

It was a bright and glorious morning, one of those calm, soothing, balmy spring mornings that hold forth such sweet promises of the future summer, that first disclosed the bursting bud, that first emits the fragrant perfume of renovated and resuscitated nature.

A great many people were astir, some to enjoy the bright sunshine, some for devotional purposes, and some to listen to and gather up the gossip of the day.

Bryan Blonday started at an early hour for the little church, anxious to obtain a glimpse of Viola Fordham, who was a punctual worshipper. He observed a great crowd about the entrance way, and as he approached nearer, he saw that they were examining something of an unusual kind.—

When he arrived yet nearer to the scene, he was discovered, and a voice from the crowd exclaimed:

"Here comes Bryan Blonday! He can read it for us. Make room for Bryan Blonday!"

The youth was surprised. What could it mean?

"Here, Bryan," exclaimed the voice, "read this paper for us. None of us can make it out."

And Bryan was hurried into the midst of the crowd, in front of the chapel door, upon which was a paper headed:

A PROCLAMATION.

All persons favorable to the cause of the King, and residing in the settlement of Van Kempen's Castle, or upon the lands of the undersigned, are requested to repair to the Manor House, in said settlement, within one week from this day, for the purpose of enrolling themselves as minute men, and to take an oath of fealty to His Majesty's government. The disaffected are warned to leave the settlement without delay, under the severest vengeance of an outraged law.

HANS VAN KEMPEN.

Bryan read this notice aloud for the benefit of the crowd, and then returned at once to the inn.

He was thunderstruck at the Royal Edict!

The youth saw at a glance that all this persecution was levelled at him. It was, in fact, the scheme that Hans had embraced to drive him away from the influence of Viola Fordham's smiles

He at once communicated the pur.

port of the proclamation he had read.

“Worse than all!” exclaimed Peter. “Is Master Hans mad? Does he think he can drive men into Toryism?”

“But what must be done?” replied Bryan. “Remember, Peter, that Hans Van Kempen is powerful, in fact, resistless, and that we Whigs are few and poor.”

“What does it matter?” rejoined Peter, earnestly. “Are not our consciences our own?”

“Alas! what does an oppressor, a minion of the king, a rich and sudden aristocrat, care for conscience?”

“He *dare* not molest us!”

“I assure you that he will!”

“We shall see,” said Peter; “Hans Van Kempen dare not enforce his proclamations.”

“Policy dictates that a storm should be provided for before it arrives,” replied Bryan. “Do not deceive yourself about Hans Van Kempen; he is base enough for any purpose.”

“Then you must direct us,” said Peter, who placed the most implicit reliance upon Bryan’s boldness and sagacity.

“I will think of the matter,” said the youth, and he darted from the door and disappeared.

“The devil!” exclaimed the landlord, gazing after him.

Bryan had discovered Carl Knipper advancing down the street, and he ran toward him.

“Ah! Carl,” he said, “this is fortunate. Can you obtain me one more

meeting with Viola? This is the last time I shall trouble you, for, Carl, I am about leaving the settlement.”

“Why?” asked Carl, removing his short black pipe from his mouth, and opening his eyes to their greatest extension.

“It is the will of your master!”

“What master?”

“Hans Van Kempen.”

“Ah! I see, jealousy.”

“Aye, Carl! jealousy—malice.”

“But why leave us? Have you not a right to the air you breathe?—Does Hans own it?”

“No; but I feel that this is no longer a fitting place for me. There are old scores between Hans and me; and if I *do* leave the place, I shall appoint an early day for a settlement.”

“Carl smiled, as if he understood the young man’s meaning.

“Can you provide the meeting?” repeated Bryan.

“I will try,” said Carl.

“And if you succeed, how shall I know?”

“I will see you again.”

“That will do. Let it be in the grove.”

“Yes.”

And Carl pursued his own way, and Bryan returned to the inn.

As Bryan had informed Peter Schnapps, the situation of the few Whigs of the settlement, was a critical one. All their wealth, all their interests, in fact, all their affections were centered in their homes, their little farms, and the scenes that time and familiarity had endeared to them.

To resist was out of the question.

for they were numerically weak.— Would it not, therefore, be better policy to appear to submit to the exactions of Hans, and await their time?

Bryan thought it would, and communicated his convictions to Peter.— The worthy inn-keeper leaped from his chair in amazement, and uttering a great oath, exclaimed :

“ *What!* take an oath of fealty to the king, and enroll myself as a minute man in his service? May the devil split me——”

“ Hush !” cried Bryan, “ make no rash resolves. Tell me how you can resist ?”

“ *Fight!*” roared Peter.

“ But what can you do against the numbers of the Patroon’s followers. Don’t you see that it is worse than foolish ?”

“ But the oath——”

Is of no binding force,” interrupted Bryan. “ You are driven to it.— You cannot resist, and neither in the eyes of God or man, is the disregarding of such an oath deemed criminal. You must either submit or be destroyed. Hans will certainly crush you, and drive you as outcasts from your homes and possessions !”

Bryan’s reasoning evidently made an impression on the mind of the inn-keeper, yet he shook his head.

“ You cannot deny the truth of my argument,” Bryan continued.— “ Now let us follow it a little further. If you *do* resist and are destroyed, who does it benefit, but your enemy? It does not assist the cause of your country. You see that resistance is out of the question.”

These were forcible arguments.— Peter could not deny their legitimacy—he could not avoid their force.

“ Then you, too, will take the oath ?”

“ No.”

“ And why not, pray ?”

“ Before the time specified in the proclamation expires, I shall be far away from the influence of Hans Van Kempen. I go to serve my country. With you, and our few friends, the case is different. You have families depending upon you for support ; your interests are centered here, and to remove is only to submit to danger and privation.”

“ You to be a soldier ?”

“ Aye, Peter, *I* to be a soldier.”

The inn-keeper could scarcely restrain himself.

“ You will be a general!” he exclaimed, “ a great man! You are the life of the settlement, Bryan, and we shall feel proud of you.”

“ I hope I shall be guilty of nothing to disgrace you,” said Bryan. “ As I shall be busy preparing for my immediate departure, I trust you will take it upon yourself to see our friends, and urge them to the course I have recommended.”

“ Certainly,” said Peter, “ for the more I think of your advice, the more I am satisfied that it is good.”

Bryan strolled through the settlement. He walked in nearly every direction, yet his eyes often turned towards the castle. The dark, dingy walls that could be seen above the enclosure, contained the magnet of his

soul, and often did he wish for a power that would penetrate their repulsive thickness.

And he looked that way, also, in hopes that Carl would present himself, and report his arrangements for another interview.

Time slipped away, however, and it was nearly dark before the faithful Dutchman made his appearance.

To the inexpressible delight of Bryan, he was the bearer of a billet from Viola Fordham.

To open it, and to read its contents, was only the work of a moment. It appointed an interview for that very night!

Regardless of the presence of Carl, Bryan exclaimed :

“ Faithful still! The fiercer the storm, the closer does her generous love cling to me!”

“ Will you meet her ?” asked Carl.

“ Without fail.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW PRISON.

THE proclamation of Hans Van Kempen caused a great excitement in and around the settlement of Van Kempen's castle. The fermentation was greatly increased, however, upon the morning following its promulgation, for then a company of workmen presented themselves in the village, and commenced the foundation of an immense log pile, the uses and intentions of which was mysteriously hinted at, but not definitely explained.

Peter Schnapps, punctual to his promise with Bryan, visited the Whig

brotherhood of the region, and de-tailed to them the advice and arguments of his young friend. Many at first demurred to it, but at length they were convinced that it was not only the safest policy, but *all* the policy they could pursue.

Accordingly, they repaired in a body to Van Kempen's castle, and complied with the stipulations of the tyrannical heir.

This conduct, on the part of those whom he knew to be opposed to the king, and ardent republicans at heart, completely surprised Hans Van Kempen.

What could it mean? Was he again to be deprived of his vengeance? Was it possible that Bryan Blonday would yet continue to elude the nets he had set for him.

One thing afforded him satisfaction; Bryan had not yet made his appearance—had not yet subscribed his name to the roll, or taken the oath. If he would only procrastinate until the expiration of the day of grace, Hans determined to arrest him.

“ Aye, by G—d!” exclaimed Hans, thinking upon the matter, “ I'll not only arrest him, but I'll hang him!”

And he derived infinite satisfaction from these conclusions.

In the meantime, the immense log building in the settlement progressed rapidly. Hans superintended the work in person, and under his direction every point was amply fortified, and rendered as strong as art and timber could make it. His delight in surveying it, seemed to increase as it

ascended higher and higher every day.

To all inquiries, concerning the uses to which he intended to devote it, he returned an evasive answer, merely alleging that time would disclose all things.

With an anxiety that increased every hour, and that finally became painfully intense, Hans watched the flight of time. Bryan Blonday did appear to take the required oath, and to make the required enrolment.—How earnestly the Patroon hoped he would not!

“Fool! that I was,” he would exclaim, mentally, “had I only inserted three days in my proclamation, my pretext to execute him would now have been clear enough!”

Occasionally he saw Bryan in the street. He was the same self-possessed, calm, pale, quiet personage of former days, and he no more heeded the presence of the landholder than the veriest cur that barked at his shadow.

This conduct galled Hans to the quick. Such thorough contempt for the heir of the Van Kempen estate was unendurable, and it aroused all the passions of the Patroon.

When Bryan separated from Carl Knipper, on the night of the proclamation, he repaired at once to the grove, where Viola had appointed the meeting.

She had not yet arrived when he reached the spot, and he seated himself by the bank of the river, and gave himself up to the gloomy reflections that thronged upon his mind, in spite of all his efforts.

A sight of the familiar objects around him increased his sadness. Not a stone, tree, or shrub, but had witnessed his happiness—had been present when he was joyful, and rejoicing in the love of his mistress. Now he had come to meet her again, and perhaps for the last time.

He was about to separate from her, and try his fortunes in the rugged path of war.

Bryan was not kept long in waiting. In the midst of his melancholy reflections, Viola entered the grove, and every mark of care and anxiety vanished from his features at once. In a few moments he was seated beside his mistress, again pouring forth the tale of his love.

“This is very kind,” he said; “without this interview, I should indeed be wretched. Of course Carl informed you that it would be the last I should request of you?”

“*The last, Bryan?*”

There was a touching earnestness in the girl's tone, as she asked the simple question.

“The last!” said Bryan; “at least for a long time!”

“Explain yourself.”

Bryan told all.

The bright tears streamed down the cheek of the fair girl, as the youth recited the persecution of Hans.

“Is it possible,” she said, “that my cousin is so base, so lost to every sense of honor?”

“It is true.”

“And what will it avail him?”

“Rid him of the presence of a rival!”

“Believe it not, Bryan,” exclaimed the girl, eagerly; “your image is enshrined where Hans Van Kempen cannot reach it! Though a thousand miles should separate us, you will be ever present to my heart, and *there* Hans Van Kempen, with all his power, cannot be admitted.”

Bryan clasped the girl to his bosom, in a transport of gratitude.

“Then,” he said. “you say truly. All his machinations will avail him but little.”

“If he was not a fool, he would abandon such measures.

“Love has blinded his judgment.”

“*Love, indeed!*” exclaimed Viola, with a scornful curl of her beautiful lip, “rather say his *avarice*.”

“Well, his avarice, then, if that pleases you.”

“But you will not be long absent?”

“God only knows. The fate of war, above everything else, is uncertain. Perhaps, dearest, I never shall return.”

“Say not so, Bryan. I am sure you *will* return, and with a wreath of glory!”

The youth smiled. For a moment, visions of glory, chivalrous deeds, and mighty battles, filled his bosom and dazzled his judgment, but fact whispered that the road to these tempting situations lay through blood, danger, and hardship, and that to secure them, he must separate from all he held dear on earth.

He derived no satisfaction from the anticipation.

“Fortune directs us all,” he said, “and it is perhaps the greatest bless-

ing conferred upon man, that the future is withheld from his examination. My love of country alone leads me to the battle field.”

“And that is a holy motive, and cannot but be blessed!” exclaimed Viola, tenderly pressing his hand.

The night was far advanced before the lovers separated. When at length they did part, it was with tears and promises of eternal constancy on both sides. The faithful Carl was at the gate to admit Viola; and Bryan did not leave his position, near the grove, until it had shut the form of his mistress from his view.

Then he turned, and sought the inn of Peter Schnapps.

It was not until several days after the interview that Bryan completed his preparations for departure. One morning, he descended into the bar-room, and after informing Peter that he was ready for his journey, he ran down to the little cottage, so dear to his heart, to bid a final farewell to Fielding and his excellent wife.

The meeting was a protracted and very painful one, and the parting was productive of great misery. Bryan at length tore himself away, and again repaired to the inn for his clothing, which he had prepared for the occasion. Peter was alone when he entered.

“Now, Peter, my good friend,” he said, approaching the publican, and extending his hand, “I must separate with you, and then I hope the pains of leaves-taking are over!”

Peter received the proffered hand

and bestowed upon it a most nervous gripe. His voice faltered as he said : "Some one has missed the ford, and is drowning in the deep water!"

"Then, Bryan Blonday, you are going?"

"I am.

"Well, God bless you and prosper you. You have a generous heart, Bryan, a noble heart! You will never lack for friends. Have you not confidence enough in me to tell me your place of destination? It would gratify me to know."

"To be sure I have. I am going to Fort Stanwix."

"What?"

"To Fort Stanwix."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. It is the nearest military station, and they are in want of men. The Tories and Indians are threatening to invest it, and Gansevoort, the commander, has called in the militia to his aid."

"Then you will cross the river at the ford below?"

"I shall."

"I will accompany you thus far, and see that you are over. It shall not be said that you left like a thief."

"Thank you," replied Bryan.

And the friends left the inn, and proceeded down the river, some two miles or more, to the ford Schnapps had alluded to.

As they came within sight of the crossing, they saw a horse struggling violently in the water, and presently a human form arose to the surface, and in faint, strangling accents, vociferated : "Help!"

"Great God!" exclaimed Peter

Bryan said not a word, but hastily divesting himself of his upper garments, he rushed into the stream. He soon reached the spot where he had seen the form of the drowning man, but it had disappeared.

It soon became visible again, and Bryan plunged into the deep water after it. He seized it just as it was sinking, and struck out for the shore with his burthen.

"Bravo!" shouted Peter, who remained upon the shore, in consequence of his inability to swim.

Bryan exerted himself most lustily and, after a long struggle, reached the shore nearly exhausted.

Peter took the stranger in his arms, and after bestowing him upon the soft, green sod, commenced using the only means of resuscitation at hand.

Bryan could hardly maintain his standing position.

Peter worked with his patient most faithfully, and, by and by, had the satisfaction of seeing him revive. Thus, for the first time, he looked earnestly into his face.

He exclaimed in surprise:—

"Can it be possible, Bryan!"

"What?" asked the youth.

"This is the Attorney!"

"What Attorney?"

"The one I have mentioned to you! He drew up Abram Van Kempen's will. It is certainly him."

And Peter renewed his rubbing and rolling, after sending Bryan to secure the horse.

It was indeed Fozzle.

More than an hour elapsed before the Attorney could speak. The landlord was provided, luckily, with a flask of brandy, that he had designed to present to Bryan at their parting, and he hastened to administer to his patient a portion of its contents.

Under its influence he revived rapidly.

"A narrow escape!" he said, looking gratefully at Peter.

"Narrow enough! In fact it would have been no escape at all but for the exertion of that youth you-der!"

"What youth?"

"He with the horse."

Bryan approached, leading the Attorney's animal.

"Is this the young man?" asked the Attorney, gazing admiringly upon the dripping form of Bryan.

"Yes. He brought you to the shore!"

"What is his name?"

"Bryan Blonday."

The stranger started.

"He is a noble youth!" he exclaimed. "When I arrive at the settlement of Van Kempen's castle he shall be rewarded."

Bryan was engaged in putting on his garments, but he overheard this discourse. When he had completed his dressing, he said, turning to Peter and the stranger:—

"Now, gentlemen, I must leave you! Good bye, Peter; and you—" he said, turning to the stranger, "I hope, will experience no inconveni-

ence or mischief from your early bath!"

Bryan moved toward the ford.

"Hold!" cried the Attorney; "let me reward you for your generous services. You are deserving."

"I ask no reward."

"I am determined," said Fozzle; "these generous actions are not over numerous, and deserve substantial marks of approval. You have saved my life!"

Fozzle drew a heavy purse from his pocket, and extended it towards the youth.

A faint smile lingered for a moment around Bryan's lips, and he replied:

"You mistake me entirely, sir. You are welcome to the favor I have rendered you. Money could not have purchased it. I am neither a mendicant or a mercenary!"

And without waiting farther remark, he entered the stream, and moved onward.

Both Peter and the Attorney watched him until he landed upon the opposite bank. Then he entered a rude road, leading up the river, and disappeared in the wood.

"A singular young man!" exclaimed Fozzle. "But few would have refused the tempting offer."

"He is proud," said Peter. "I do not mean the low, paltry pride, such as Hans Van Kempen is possessed of—but he is noble and generous, as he is proud!"

"He is truly a man before his boyhood is passed."

"That is true," continued Peter—
 "My heart bleeds for him, for I know his own is sad enough this morning."

"How so!"

And Peter hastily sketched the difficulties that had driven Bryan Blunday from his home.

Fizzle seemed deeply interested in the narratiou. When it was concluded, he said :

"I am deeply interested in the affairs of this youth; indeed, I have every cause to be. At present I can only think of reaching your inn, and exchanging these dripping clothes for some more comfortable. I must know all about my young preserver."

"We shall hear of him, without doubt," said Peter. "He will make no common soldier."

The landlord assisted the Attorney to mount his horse, and they proceeded towards the settlement.

They arrived at the inn in due time, Fizzle proceeded to make such changes in his dress as seemed most befitting. Peter proceeded to his kitchen to order a substantial breakfast for his guest, and to relate to his better half the daring achievement of his especial favorite, Bryan Blunday.

We have already stated that Hans Van Kempen most anxiously counted the lapse of time within which it was specified that all the inhabitants of the settlement should take the oath of allegiance to his majesty's government. Bryan did not present himself, and every day his hopes that he would not grew stronger and brighter. It seem-

ed that his rival was obstinately bent upon placing himself in his power.

"All I ask," he would cry to himself, "is the slightest pretext. Then I will remove the impudent beggar!"

Hans forgot that Harman was hanged upon a gallows of his own construction!

At length the time expired. Without a moment's delay, Hans proceeded to his library to order the arrest of the obstinate Whig. He collected a body of his servants, placed one of his confidential tenants at their head, and dispatched them to bring Bryan before him at once.

To the servants this was a extremely unpleasant task. With them the youth was a favorite, but they dared not refuse their master, and they accordingly proceeded with the tenant.

The inn of Peter Schnapps was the first place visited. The landlord was questioned with regard to the whereabouts of the youth, but Peter, surprised at the advent of his menial force, and suspicious of an evil design against Bryan, answered them with hesitation, and evasively.

"None of this!" exclaimed the leader of the Tory police. "We are not to be trifled with! We are acting under the authority of Hans Van Kempen, the Patroon!"

"And who the devil is Van Hans Kempen, and what do I care for his authority, you impudent dog!" exclaimed Peter, his wrath breaking through all the bounds of discretion. "None of your braggadocio here, or

I will pitch you out of the house, if you serve the devil! I am my own master!"

"And you refuse to answer us, then?"

"Answer what?"

"Where is Bryan Blunday?"

"I tell you that I know not."

"Is he not a member of your household?"

"No."

"This will do," said the tenant, turning to his companions, who were rejoicing over the spirit exhibited by Peter. "We will proceed to the cottage of Fielding, and when we return to the castle, we will not fail to report the conduct of Peter Schnapps to the Patroon. Perhaps he will regret it!"

Peter was employed in rinsing a drinking glass as the tenant made this announcement, and nothing but the recollection that the vessel had cost one shilling and sixpence sterling prevented him from hurling it at his head. As it was, he contented himself with exclaiming, in an under tone:

"Perhaps he will, and perhaps he will not! Some persons are not scared at owls, and *I'm* one of 'em!"

The constabulary moved off towards the cottage of the laborer, and again renewed the enquiries for Bryan.

Neither Fielding or his wife, knew aught of the youth.

"Then we shall be compelled to search your dwelling!" said the tenant.

"Search at pleasure," replied Fielding.

The servants refused to assist in an invasion of the premises; but the tenant, anxious to secure the favor and good will of his master, was determined to succeed in arresting his man, and he proceeded alone to ransack the cottage.

The search was fruitless, no trace of Bryan being discovered.

"Have you a knowledge of his lurking place?" asked the tenant, approaching the laborer.

"I have not."

"When did you see him last?"

Fielding hesitated

"Answer."

"I do not remember. It is several days since!"

"Let us return to the castle," said the important officer. "I have no doubt but the Patroon can devise measures for his capture!"

And the unsuccessful expedition moved off to the castle, where Hans was impatiently awaiting their arrival.

"Where is the prisoner?" he asked, when the tenant made his appearance alone.

"He cannot be found!"

"*The Devil!*" cried Hans; "and why not?"

"We could get no trace of him from any one."

The Patroon was fearfully enraged.

"Is he not about the settlement?"

"Not unless he is concealed!"

"D—n the cur! I'll secure him yet. I'll hunt him even from the caves of the earth, and if any one connives at his escape, they shall be hanged upon a tree!"

The tenant reported the conduct of Peter Schnapps, adding several incidents by way of embellishment.

“Aye! curse that Schnapps!” vociferated Hans; “he has taken the oath and enrolled himself, but a more bitter Whig never breathed! He must be watched, and if it only happens that he is the accomplice of Bryan, the crows of the valley shall feast upon his carcase!”

“Shall I proceed further in my attempts?” asked the office.

“Not now!” replied Hans. “I will first adopt some other measures. When I require your services, I will inform you.”

The tenant departed.

Again Hans resumed his writing materials, and in a short time penned the following new

PROCLAMATION :

Whereas, Bryan Blonday, a determined and malicious Whig, has refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Government of his Majesty, or to enroll himself as a minute-man, in the service. This is to give notice, that I will pay a reward of TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY POUNDS to any person or persons who will arrest the said Blonday and bring him before me.

Any person detected in harboring, or assisting the said Bryan to escape, will be subjected to the severest punishment personally, and suffer from a confiscation of property.

HANS VAN KEMPEN.

“I will try the power of gold!” said the Patroon.

Copies of this proclamation were

soon posted in conspicuous places, through the settlement.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BLUE BROTHERHOOD.

Whilst these denunciations were being thundered against Bryan Blonday, in the settlement of Van Kempen's castle, the youth was diligent pursuing his way toward Fort Stanwix.

The foresight of the inn-keepers' wife had provided him with quite a supply of provisions, and the little groves along his path, and the bright streams that flowed into the river, furnished him with resting places and a most grateful beverage.

Just at night, on the second day of his lonely journeying, he reached a wild and rocky dell, where the river tumbled and foamed over a gentle declivity, and where it seemed that his path must end, for the rocks and hills seemed to close upon it at a little distance beyond him.

The romantic beauty of this spot, the hoarse roar of the waterfall, the dashing of the spray, and the grandeur of the forest about him, had peculiar and resistless charms for Bryan, and he resolved to halt for the night. He selected a thicket for a lodging place, spread the remains of his provisions before him, and seated himself.

His repast was not of long duration, and after it was concluded, he threw himself at length beside the road, to survey at his leisure the attractive scenery by which he was surrounded.

Imperceptibly to him, the roar of the cataract died away—the rocky hillside became dim and indistinct—

the setting sun illuminated the glittering spray in vain, for his heart and his mind were at Van Kempen's castle filled with the matchless charms of his mistress.

It was a most delightful reverie.—The youth forgot his exile—forgot his heaviness of heart, his loneliness, and his sorrows, and he was again happy in the love of Viola Fordham.

The sharp crack of a rifle, followed by a wild yell, banished the sweet dream, and he again awoke to the realities around him.

He hastily crawled within the shelter of the thicket.

For a few moments after the discharge of the rifle, all was still, but then the yelling was resumed, and the firing once more commenced.

"That sounds like a battle," said the youth ; "if that is the case, I am upon dangerous ground."

If he had any doubts regarding the noises, they were soon dispelled, for the yelling, shouting, and firing became continuous.

"It is upon the hill above me!" he said ; "I will climb its side, and examine the combatants."

He left the thicket, and commenced the ascent of the rough and precipitate mountain. His path was not only toilsome, but dangerous, for, at almost every step, fragments of rock rolled from beneath his feet, and thundered in the vale below. The twigs and bushes, with which he sustained his clinging form, had but an insecure root in the narrow fissures in which they grew.

He reached the summit, however,

and a scene of strife was at once opened to his view.

Near the edge of the hill, a group of some fifty or sixty horses were secured to the trees, and beyond them a herd of cattle were galloping and bellowing through the wood. Still further on, he could discover armed men concealed behind logs and trees, watching their opportunities to fire upon their opponents, some of whom were vainly endeavoring to collect and stop the frightened cattle.

"What can it mean?" said the youth, concealing his body as well as he could. "There are two parties certainly, but I cannot distinguish one side from the other."

The skirmish, for it scarcely deserved any other name, was continued, but at length it became apparent that the darkness would put an end to it. Bryan determined to stay and witness the result, scarcely hoping that one of the parties might be composed of his own political friends.

Whilst these hopes were animating his mind, the party beyond the horses rushed from their coverts, and Bryan thought he detected long knives in their hands. They yelled and shouted furiously as they ran, but the dim twilight soon obscured their forms from his view.

He could judge from the sounds, however, that a hand-to-hand encounter was progressing. There was the hurried trampling of feet, the clash of weapons, and occasionally a groan and execration. This continued for half an hour.

Then the tumult died away, and

Bryan heard footsteps approaching his place of concealment.

It proved to be the conquering party, and the riders of the steeds we have mentioned. The first words they uttered caused an emotion of joy in the young man's heart.

"Pre-haps, this General St. Leger and his d—d Indians will fast a little time, if they depend upon the supply of American beef. What do you think, Captain Drake?"

"I endorse your opinion," replied the man addressed as Captain Drake. "If we intend to enjoy the beef ourselves, we must halt here for the night, and collect them in the morning."

"That's of course. We can lay where we are."

The advancing party reached the trees where their horses were secured, and Bryan determined to discover himself. He judged from the conversation that he had heard, that they were Whigs, and he in consequence felt no fears for his reception. He crawled from behind his log, and presented himself.

"Who is this?" asked Captain Drake, coming to a halt.

"A stranger," replied Bryan.

"Whig or Tory?"

"A Whig."

"That's the kind! Just the kind. Where do you hail from?"

"Van Kempen's castle."

"The devil you do! Whigs are scarce that way."

"Yes, but true, when you find them."

"I hope so. Where are you bound?"

"In search of service."

"What service?"

"The service of my country."

"That's right, my hearty! You could not have come out at a better time. Soldiers are scarce."

"So I have heard."

"But you look young for war."

"I am nineteen."

"That will do. Now tell us your name."

"Bryan Blonday!"

"The devil! An old acquaintance!"

"And how can that be?" asked Bryan, greatly surprised. "I have not been much of a traveller, and I am sure I never saw you at the settlement."

"True enough, perhaps," said Captain Drake, smiling; "but honest Peter Schnapps told me all about you long ago. Did you never hear of the Blue Brotherhood?"

"Indeed, I have!"

"Well, now you see a part of them. If you are disposed, you may join us. Tarry with us until morning, and we shall visit our present camp."

Bryan needed no pressing to comply with this invitation. He accepted it at once. He was also delighted with the fortune that had brought him in contact with the Blue Brotherhood, one of the most famous partisan bands that the war had produced.

The soldiers speedily started a fire, for the sun had set, and the twilight deepened into night. Within the reach of its genial warmth, and when the light flamed full upon the features of his companions, Bryan seated him

self to examine their appearance more closely than he had yet been enabled to do.

The Blue Brotherhood, at least that part of them that he saw before him, were men in the prime of life, hardy, daring, and reckless. Their leader, Captain Drake, was the oldest man in the group, being, as near as Bryan could judge from appearances, nearly, if not quite, fifty years of age.

His face was perfectly browned by exposure to the winds and sun, but it was a firm and expressive one. The once black hair was sprinkled profusely with grey, and the huge whiskers that completely concealed the cheeks, were also streaked with the same indications of age. The light of the keen eye, however, was not dimmed, nor was the square, compact, and heavily-moulded form bent in the least, or seemingly robbed of one particle of its youthful activity.

By the side of the Captain, sat his lieutenant, a much younger man, yet more muscular in his developments, and far more reckless in his general demeanor.

A conversation of about an hour, conducted upon the principles of bar-room equality, soon gave Bryan a just idea of the character of his associates. They were a high-spirited, brave, and determined set of men, entirely destitute of polish or refinement, yet possessed of noble and generous feelings, and honest in their attachments to the cause of liberty.

Bryan felt that he should be delighted with service in the company of such noble looking men.

After the evening had somewhat advanced, the soldiers, with the exception of some sentinels that were posted in the wood to prevent a surprise, rolled themselves in their blankets and sought repose. A blanket, from an extra supply on hand, was furnished Bryan, and he, with the rest, crawled under the shelter of a bush and courted sleep.

The night was far spent before he lost himself in the oblivious arms of slumber.

The first beams of the morning sun awakened him. Fires were blazing all around him, and the soldiers were preparing their breakfast. He was invited to join the Captain's mess, and was soon regaling himself upon the substantial food of the camp.

"As soon as we collect the cattle that have strayed into the woods, we shall march to our permanent quarters. When we arrive there, if you like us, you shall take the oath, be supplied with a horse and arms, and then become one of us."

"The oath!" said Bryan.

"Aye. No man can unite with the Blue Brotherhood without first taking the oath."

"And its obligations——"

"Are all explained before the initiation," hastily rejoined Captain Drake, "we do nothing in the dark."

"May I ask with whom you were engaged last night?"

"Oh! a marauding gang of Tories—the cowardly and unprincipled devils have been robbing the farmers below us, on the north bank of the river, of

their cattle. These they were driving through the woods for the support of St. Leger's army, who are marching from Canada to invest old Fort Stanwix.

"And you drove them off?"

"Yes. We were informed of their doings, and headed them at this place. But a few are left to tell of their defeat."

Immediately after the breakfast, the soldiers proceeded to collect the cattle. This was a work of much perplexity, and it was nearly noon before the drove and the troopers started for the camp.

This camp was situated some ten miles or thereabouts above the scene of the cattle fight, in an open space of ground fronting the river. The barracks were composed of two stone buildings that had been used as farm houses before the breaking out of the war, and a long range of log stables had been appended to them by the troopers themselves. The cleared lands in the immediate neighborhood were devoted to gardening purposes, for the use of the soldiers, and was by them most carefully tilled in the proper season.

When the Blue Brotherhood arrived at their own camp, the cattle were secured, and the horses placed in the stable. After these matters had been arranged, Bryan was conducted into the house, or fortress, as Captain Drake called it, and here he was most agreeably surprised at the order and neatness that everywhere met his eye.

The rooms were clean and inviting,

the beds spacious and conveniently arranged, and all the utensils necessary for the maintenance of such an establishment, in their proper places and in order.

"Here are our quarters," said Captain Drake. "Except when on duty, we reside here. If you choose to take on with us, to-night shall be set apart for your initiation."

"The sooner the better," replied Bryan, delighted with all he saw, and anxious to commence his new duties.

"Well, then your uniform must be prepared at once. You see that our dress is but a little peculiar, yet by it we distinguish one another. We have a costumer at hand who will speedily fit you out."

And Bryan was presented to an old man who made and repaired the clothing of the Brotherhood.

The uniform was a simple affair, yet it was far from uncomely. It consisted merely of a deep blouse, or short hunting shirt, of bright blue, worn over the usual clothing, a blue cap, closely fitting the head, ornamented with a cockade of thin silver.

Bryan waited for the coming night with the greatest impatience. So ardent had his desire to be a soldier become, that he thought the hours were lengthened into days, and that the sun would never set. The Captain and the soldiers endeavored to entertain him, but although he listened to their conversation with seeming interest, his heart was filled with a painful impatience.

"Will the night never come?" he would ask himself.

The longest day must pass away, and night came at length, to the great relief of Bryan.

As soon as supper was disposed of and the barrack lamps lighted, the Blue Brotherhood assembled in the large room in which they partook of their food. In the centre of the congregation was a table, upon which was the roll of the company, the constitution and by-laws of the association, and a Bible.

Before this table Bryan was seated, and the Captain, after silence had been secured, proceeded to explain to the youth, the nature and obligations of the oath and compact.

The Blue Brotherhood bound themselves to an armed organization until the independence of the Colonies was acknowledged by Great Britain, or until they were disabled by wounds or natural infirmities, and rendered unfit for duty.

They were independent, and under the control of no leaders but those of their own selection.

The oath bound them to aid and assist one another in all cases, and under all circumstances. It also stipulated that they should stand by their colors until ordered to retreat, and to regard all the proceedings, designs and intentions of the troop as secret, and not to be disclosed, except to an initiated brother.

Bryan cheerfully took the oath, signed the muster roll, and with three vociferous cheers the whole company hailed him as one of the Brothers. Captain Drake then presented him with a complete list of the arms ne-

cessary for his young arms to wield, and with the uniform, which was already completed.

"To-morrow," he added, "you may select a horse for yourself from several that we have in our stables."

Again the company uttered a succession of cheers, and shook the new soldier cordially by the hand.

When the ceremony was over, Bryan was conducted to his own room, and a bed and a mess assigned to him.

His wishes were realized. He was a soldier in the cause of his country.

How he desired to see Peter Schnapps, and Carl Knipper, his true-hearted confidante, to inform them of the singular good fortune that had attended his wandering footsteps.

In his dreams that night Bryan Blunday visited Van Kempen's Castle at the head of the troop.

In the bright light of the morning he prayed that his dream might be realized ere a long time.

After the morning meal was over, he visited the stables to select for himself a steed. He immediately made choice of a large and spirited grey, whose broad chest and strong limbs promised both speed and bottom. All the old soldiers who had accompanied him commended his choice.

Bryan was now a perfect soldier. All his appointments were complete.

All that was necessary now to complete his happiness was an opportunity to put his skill to the test.

This the Captain had determined to afford him, for as soon as he returned

from the stables he addressed him :

"Now, Master Blonday, as you are one of us, I design to place you in immediate service, and where your information and knowledge of the country can avail us much."

"I shall be delighted with active employment," replied Bryan.

"A few miles below the Van Kempen settlement," continued the Captain, "some friends of our cause have collected a quantity of supplies, which we shall need presently, for appearances seem to indicate that we shall soon be called to active duties in the region of Fort Stanwix. I desire to place a small party under your control, and send you for the stores."

"I will cheerfully undertake the mission."

"Are the Tories armed and astir in that region?"

"They are not."

"Then a small party will be sufficient?"

"Without a doubt."

"And you are acquainted with the country?"

"Intimately."

"Then you shall depart to-morrow. During the day I will select your party."

Bryan was delighted. If he could not obtain an interview with Viola Fordham in his absence, he could enjoy the happiness of passing her vicinity, and that, at least, was some consolation. He expressed a thousand thanks to the Captain for his confidence.

The remainder of the day passed quickly and pleasantly to the young

soldier. He had but few arrangements to make for his expected march, and his leisure hours he devoted to trying the speed and docility of his horse, and to the use of his weapons.

"When the night approached, he sought his couch at an early hour, anxious for his march upon the morrow."

He was destined to a disappointment, for the rain descended in torrents when he arose, and precluded the possibility of a start. It continued to pour throughout the day and night, and Captain Drake deemed it advisable to postpone the expedition for a week, in order that the swollen streams across which the expedition would be obliged to pass, might have time to empty their surplus waters.

Bryan submitted to the new arrangement with a good grace, and when, at last, the day of their departure did arrive, he felt that the delay had increased his enjoyment.

Some twenty of the most experienced soldiers were selected to accompany him, and when they were ready for departure, the Captain said :

"Perhaps, as you pass so near your home, you will desire to visit it. Should you conclude to do so, you had better go alone, or the presence of so many of you might excite the ire of good Hans Van Kempen, and be productive of difficulty."

"I will be discreet," said Bryan, rejoicing at the permission to visit his friends.

"And do not forget to give my compliments to Peter Schnapps, good luck to his house!"

"I will not forget," said Bryan.

And with a light heart and bright anticipations, he moved off upon his journey.

How frequently are our expectations but the reverse of the realities that occur to us.

The march through the fragrant woods was delightful. As they rode along, the companions of the young man amused him with the history of their numerous battles since the war, and he in turn unfolded to them his own slender stock of personal history.

In this manner the first day passed away, and they encamped, at an early hour, a few miles below the spot where the encounter with the Tories had taken place.

"To-morrow night!" mentally exclaimed Bryan, as he rolled himself up in his blanket, "I shall revisit my home."

What a hold that bright spot, home, has upon our purest affections!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST PRISONER.

THE proclamation of Hans Van Kempen, offering a reward for Bryan Blonday, excited the indignation of the Whigs, and the wonder of the Tories. It was surprising.

"What has made Bryan Blonday so important a personage in the estimation of the Patroon?" asked Fozzle, the Attorney, of his friend Peter Schnapps, after reading the notice.

"Ah!" said Peter, with a knowing shake of the head; "it is love for the king's cause, but very little, and a

more powerful feeling, a great deal Hans is a fool."

"To what do you allude?"

"Love, sir," said Peter. "Love is at the bottom of the whole of it. I know it well enough."

"A most powerful passion!"

"That's true."

"But does Hans so love Bryan, that he wants to secure and detain him in custody?"

Peter laughed.

"Hans loves a girl that will have nothing to do with him," said Peter.

"She hates him, and loves Bryan."

"Jealousy, then, is the motive!"

"Yes, if you please to call it so."

"A very malignant passion it is," replied Fozzle. "I hope the young man may elude his enemy, at all events."

"Never fear for Bryan Blonday," replied Peter. "Long ere this, he is safe enough in Fort Stanwix, and I doubt if Hans Van Kempen's reward will tempt any person to venture after him in that region. I only wish it would, that's all!"

"But the chances of war, Peter, may throw the young man in the power of the Patroon!"

"Oh! the devil take such chances," said Peter. "Bryan is wide awake! Why, bless you, sir, Hans could not trap him when he was here; what can he do now?"

"Who is the young lady that can turn an indifferent eye upon the young Patroon and his wealth?"

"Viola Fordham, to be sure."

"Ah!" cried the Attorney, "no poor fortune herself."

"No, indeed!"

"But she resides at the castle?"

"Yes."

"A painful situation, truly. If this Hans is so vindictive it is in his power to work her mischief. If she dies without a marriage, the young man possesses her property."

"No fear for her. If Hans should but threaten her, the whole settlement would rise up against him."

"That could affect him but little. Wealth, you know, is power. In every sense of the word, the Patroon is dictator in this region."

"For some, and for some he is not," replied Peter. "This high-handed measure will work his downfall."

The conversation dropped here, and the Attorney passed out into the street.

Viola Fordham was not ignorant of the persecution of her lover. She had read the proclamation of Hans, and, although no politician, and but little acquainted with the wickedness of the human heart, she readily divined its object. Carl had informed her of Bryan's departure, and most earnestly did she hope that he would escape.

One night, a day or two after the posting of the reward, she was sitting in her own room, pensive and sad, when Hans entered. Without any formality he seated himself, and commenced the discourse.

"I have come to see you," he said, "once more, with regard to the difficulties existing between us, in relation to our union. I am confident that they can be removed!"

Here was the dreaded subject again.

"Did I not request you to speak no more to me about this matter?" asked Viola scarcely able to contain her indignation.

"And what if you did?" asked Hans.

"Why do you resume it again?"

"Because I want it determined!"

"But it is already determined!"

"Not so. The last time I conversed with you about it, you urged that there were difficulties in the way of it. Now, I repeat you, I am satisfied that these difficulties can be removed!"

"They cannot."

"But I am confident!"

"And so am I."

"But will you listen to my proposals?"

"Proposals are useless."

"If you will consent to receive me as your husband, I will remove all right or claim to your property, and it shall be set apart for your own free use?"

"It will not do."

"But does not the offer convince you that I am disinterested in my views? I would wed you for yourself alone!"

"That can never be."

"And why not?"

"Do not urge me to tell."

"Nay, I insist upon knowing. It is but just that I should know, for I am deeply interested."

"I do not love you!"

"That you have already told me." Viola hesitated

"Now give me the true reason," urged Hans.

"I love another !"

A dark frown settled upon the Patroon's brow, but it was sunlight compared with the blackness that swept over his soul.

"Who is that other ?" he asked.

"You have no right to inquire."

Hans knew well enough.

"But I will know," he said.

"Perhaps you will !"

"Do you refuse to tell ?"

"I do."

"Beware !" exclaimed Hans, starting up, and striding the room. "Beware ! do not tempt me too far. Consider before it is too late. I will be to you all that you can desire, gentle, kind, and true. Turn me not off for an adventurer, a nameless——"

"Enough !" cried Viola, indignantly. "I will hear no more. If you are a reasonable man, my answer will content you. I do not love you, cannot love you, and will not wed you !"

This was explicit, and to the point. Hans felt that he had no hope of success by fair means, but he could not bring himself to think of relinquishing the fair prize before him. In his eyes she had never looked so beautiful, to his avarice, her fortune never seemed so large. His very soul was agitated by the strength of his passions.

Conscious of maintaining an iron rule over the thoughts and feelings of his tenants, and most of the inhabitants of the settlement ; aware that many of those wearing the semblance of men, worshiped his wealth, as God's chosen people once worshiped a golden

calf, he could not conceive how it was that Viola Fordham could spurn his love—could refuse to link her fate with his own !

Poor Hans, he had yet many bitter lessons to learn before he could see and appreciate her real condition !

"You will repent of this determination ! he exclaimed, in a tone more mild than Viola had expected, "and perhaps when it is too late. In charity to you, I warn you not to build up hopes of love upon Bryan Blunday ! That viper cannot escape me. My vengeance shall pursue him, and *he*, at least, shall never live to witness your triumph and my defeat. I say, be warned !"

A scornful smile, more aggravating to the soul of Hans than words of the keenest reproach, was all the reply Viola vouchsafed to this exhibition of unmanly bravado !

"Aye ! smile. Eve smiled in the garden. Scorn me, if you will despise my power. You may yet feel it !"

"I am prepared," said Viola, calmly.

"You shall have need of preparation," replied Hans, "need of all the fortitude of which you seem so confident."

"It will not fail me," quietly responded the girl. "I have no fears ; do not defer your operations in consideration of it."

"Then I leave you, madam, and remember, I shall take you at your word. When the storm comes you must not complain !"

"I will not, I assure you "

Hans departed, and left the maiden alone. chamber, his countenance was pale and haggard.

As soon as the door closed upon him, the feeling that had sustained her through the interview gave way, and she wept like a grieved infant. It seemed that her heart would break.

She felt that she was a lone female and in the power of a desperate man. She deeply regretted that she had not consented to Bryan's proposal of an immediate union.

"At least," she said, "it would have conferred upon him the right to protect me."

The mind of Hans underwent a great change after he had reached his own room. All thoughts but one were driven from it, and that assumed a burning intensity.

It was a thought of vengeance!

"*I will be avenged!*" he said, furiously smiting the table with his clenched fist. "*I will succeed—or die!*"

His reflections were dark and murderous.

At one time he resolved to double the reward he had already offered for Bryan's apprehension; and at another, he resolved to raise a company of armed men, and place himself at their head, for the purpose of hunting down the youth.

Where should he go? How should he search? Where *was* Bryan Blonday?

The impossibility of answering these questions, caused him to hesitate, before he adopted any rash schemes.

He passed a sleepless night. In the morning, when he descended from his

He continued his operations upon the new building in the settlement, and from this date, he seemed to regard its speedy completion as a matter of the most vital importance. He increased the number of laborers employed upon it, and night and day the neighboring woods echoed the blows of the axe and the hammer.

Public curiosity increased. Crowds were frequently gathered about the growing edifice, peering into its numerous compartments, and gazing upon its huge walls, but the uniform answer of Hans was:

"Time will disclose all things!"

And the people were compelled to be content.

Stimulated by the prospect of reward, many of the Tories of the settlement were upon the watch for Bryan Blonday, and anxious for his detection. In an especial manner was Peter Schmapps regarded with the greatest anxiety, for no one thought that Bryan had resorted to more than a temporary secretion, except the very few friends in his confidence.

The new building was finally completed. From the style of its exterior finish, no one doubted but it was intended for a prison, and after it was placed in a condition to receive prisoners, Hans himself threw off his air of mystery, and declared his intention of using it for that purpose.

It caused a deal of wonder among the inhabitants of Van Kempen's castle. Why did they require a prison at this time? Had anything occurred

suddenly to demoralize the people, or to induce them to commit crime? For years they had proceeded quietly, without such an appendage to their government, and what, or who required it now?

Hans was questioned upon the points, but he did not choose to explain. He merely stated that the times required a jail, and he was determined to keep up with the times. Indeed, his interest required it.

Immediately after the prison was finished, the minute men of the settlement were formed into different squads, to guard it.

This was the cause of still greater wonder.

Guard an empty prison? Who ever heard of such an absurd proceeding? It was the height of folly, and Hans Van Kempen was absolutely and decidedly insane.

Hans paid no heed to these remarks, or to the sneers that accompanied them. He proceeded with his regulations, and enforced them too. Before his obstinate determination, all clamor ceased, and nightly was the tenantless prison guarded by a patrol of the luckless inhabitants.

"Surely!" exclaimed an old inhabitant, "innovation and folly can go no further."

He was mistaken, however.

The inhabitants one morning were aroused from their slumbers by the shrieks of a fife and the thunders of a drum! Peering from their windows, they discovered parading the streets, a company of soldiers—of regular

soldiers, wearing the uniform of the king!

They marched boldly up to the Castle, and there they were provided for by Hans Van Kempen.

"Verily!" exclaimed Peter Schnapps, rubbing his eyes, and staring in astonishment, "old things have passed away, and all things have become new!

Public notice was soon given, that the troops would remain in the settlement to obtain recruits, and to enforce the authority of Hans Van Kempen, who had been appointed a magistrate.

Van Kempen's castle was an important place.

Hans himself assumed a new character. He strutted immeasurably—he talked pompously, and issued his various orders with the air of a man who had the world at his command.

And the Patroon had reasons of his own for this conduct. He was determined to awe Viola Fordham—to display his power to her, in the vain hope that he might thereby win her love!

Poor fool! how little he knew of the road to a woman's affections. It was like sending messengers of peace upon cannon balls, bomb shells, and rockets!

Viola was not to be moved. Threats and denunciations—hard words, and pompous displays—it was all the same to her.

She loved Bryan Blunday, and him only.

But we must return to Bryan.

He commenced his second day's march with the greatest eagerness. Every step of his noble horse bore him

nearer to those scenes endeared to his memory, and indelibly impressed upon his heart. The region in which he had spent in his boyhood ; where he had loved, where he had been beloved, would soon open upon him, and he could not restrain an elevation of the feelings, an eagerness that would manifest itself in spite of his resistance.

The path, or rude road, pursued by the little party, was much more smooth and free from obstructions than on the previous day. Consequently they were enabled to make more speed, and the sun was yet some distance from the western horizon when Bryan ordered a halt, a few miles above the ford.

He informed his companions of the reasons for his early halt. He intended to visit the settlement, and he did not deem it prudent to venture too near with the whole party, for fear of discovery by some of the agents of Hans.

His comrades assented to his arrangements.

The supper was prepared early ; after this, the arrangements of the night were completed, and just as the sun was sinking in the west, Bryan, entirely alone, and on foot, started for the settlement.

How lightly he pursued his solitary path, and how lively were the emotions of his heart.

"If I could only see Carl Knipper," he exclaimed, "possibly I could enjoy an interview with Viola. Oh! that would be so delightful, for it seems as if our separation had endured an age!"

It was dark when he reached the ford, quite dark, but Bryan had no fears. He was thoroughly acquainted with the ground, indeed, he knew every stone.

He succeeded in crossing in safety, but just as he was crossing the opposite bank, he discovered the figure of some person moving toward him.

Knowing that flight would only betray him, and hoping in the darkness to pass unobserved, he kept on his way.

He had proceeded but a little distance, before a voice hailed him.

"Halt! and give the countersign!"

"What can this mean?" thought Bryan. "Hans Van Kempen's castle become a military post since my absence. The voice is a strange one too. It cannot be ; some one thinks to practice on my fears."

And he was pursuing his way without regarding the challenge.

"*Halt!*" repeated the voice, with startling earnestness, and the unknown man advanced toward him.

"Who are you?" asked Bryan, as the man approached him, he discovered that he wore a red coat and carried a musket.

"Give me the countersign, I repeat," said the soldier.

"What if I do not know it?" asked Bryan.

"Then you must go with me to the guard-house."

"The devil I will. These are new arrangements for Van Kempen's castle. Let me know when it happened that a man could not pass out and in

to his house without the choice of a countersign and a guard-house?"

"If you reside here, you know as well as I do," replied the sentinel. "If you are a stranger, you may deliver yourself up to me, and I will conduct you to safe quarters."

"I am obliged to you," said the youth. "When I reach the settlement, I have a home of my own."

"And your name?"

"No matter about the name. I do not recognize your right to ask it. I have been absent some two weeks or thereabouts, and when I left, the place was destitute of soldiers or guards."

"But it is now supplied with both," said the soldier.

"No matter. You must not detain me. Stand aside and let me pass. I am somewhat in haste!"

Bryan was resolute, yet he feared that he had thoughtlessly involved himself in difficulty.

"I repeat, and for the last time," replied the soldier, "that you cannot pass without the countersign."

"What am I to do. Let me go back then."

"I cannot."

"Well."

"You must go to the guard-house."

"I will not."

"*You will,*" cried the soldier, bringing his musket to a shoulder. "If you do not like that, I will take you before a magistrate. If you are a resident of the settlement, he will know you and release you at once. If you offer to resist, I will fire upon you!"

"Who is this magistrate?" asked Bryan.

"You a resident and not know?"

"There was none in the settlement when I left."

"Do you know Hans Van Kempen?"

"Yes."

"He is the magistrate."

Bryan started. He was perplexed

"Will you go with me?" asked the soldier.

With the exception of a short knife, designed more for culinary necessities of the soldier, than for a weapon of defence, Bryan was unarmed. After a moment's reflection, he resolved to submit to the soldier; and when he arrived near the village, to seize upon an opportunity and make his escape

"Yes, I will go with you."

"Are you armed?"

"No."

"Give me your arm then."

And Bryan linked his arm within the soldier's, and they moved on in the direction of the settlement.

As they approached the place, the youth intently watched an opportunity of attempting his escape.

How much more earnest in the matter would he have been had he known of the proceedings of Hans during his absence. He was ignorant of the existence of a jail, ignorant that a reward was offered for his apprehension.

Fortune was against the youth. The soldier kept a firm grasp upon his arm, and when within a short distance of the village, he was joined by a companion in a red coat.

As he approached the gloomy-looking edifice, he was completely surprised. The appearance of the prison seemed like the work of enchantment. When he departed from the place, the spot it occupied was vacant. Unable to restrain his wonder, he asked :

“What place is this?”

“By the Gods!” exclaimed the sentinel, “I believe you are an arch imposter. But a little while ago, you pretended that you were a resident of the settlement, and you do not know the prison!”

“*The Prison!*”

“Aye!” your lodging place for to-night.”

Bryan was confounded.

“But you promised to take me before the magistrate.”

“But not to-night.”

“And why?”

“The Patroon must not be disturbed.”

“The devil, sir! Take me before him at once. I will teach you that *I am* a resident of the place, and that Hans Van Kempen is my schoolfellow. Take me before him, I say!”

“Not so fast, young man. For the night you will tarry here. Your accommodation will be spacious, airy, and clean, for you are the first occupant.”

Bryan saw that resistance would be worse than useless, and he suffered himself to be conducted within the jail.

Alas! for the bright anticipations with which he had set out upon his ill-starred visit

CHAPTER IX.

THE DOUBLE RESCUE.

NOT a ray of light, not a solitary glimmer, penetrated the compartment of the prison in which Bryan Blonday was confined. All was enveloped in a darkness as profound as the grave, or that wherewith Egypt was afflicted in the olden time. The air was close and suffocating, and for some time after his incarceration, his situation was intolerable.

Hope did not desert the young man.

Luckily for us, this hope, this main stay and prop of the human mind, in situations of distress and gloom, is the last feeling to desert us. The first to bring light upon our darkness, it clings to us until the grave closes over us.

Hans Van Kempen, he thought, would not harm him. He dare not. He had been guilty of no crime, and he was free!

After much reflection, he concluded the morning would witness his liberation, and soon after arriving at this conclusion he fell asleep, and forgot his troubles in pleasant dreams.

The fife and drum of the red-coats aroused him at sun-rise.

“This unpleasant drum will soon cease,” he said, “and then I shall be permitted to visit my friends. I wonder if the good Peter Schnapps has heard of my mishap?”

Bryan forgot that he was unknown to the sentinel who had arrested him, and that his friends must remain in ignorance of his fate until he had been

brought before Hans, and recognized!

The hours moved slowly away, and yet Bryan was left to solitude. No one approached him.

“Was it possible that he was forgotten?”

In the morning, after the usual breakfast hour, the sentinel who had arrested Bryan, entirely ignorant of the value of his capture, went up to the Castle to report to the Patroon.

Hans had just finished his breakfast, and was walking upon the lawn when the soldier approached him.

“I have come to report to you,” he said. “I was the captain of the watch last night.”

“Well.”

“I arrested a stranger.”

“Go on.”

“I discovered him crossing the ford, and at once took him into custody. He refused to give up his name.”

“Where is he?”

“In the jail.”

“Describe his person.”

“That I cannot do. In the darkness I could see but little of it.”

“Was he young or old?”

“A young man.”

“I will attend to it.”

The sentinel bowed and departed.

“If it were only Bryan Blunday!” exclaimed Hans, “then would my dearest wish be gratified.”

He retired to his library, and in the turmoil and perplexity of his business he forgot his prisoner.

His conversation with the sentinel did not occur to him until nearly night,

then he remembered it, and exclaimed:

“Ah! that poor devil of a prisoner! I had forgotten him. Doubtless it is some poor traveller, who will feel but little gratified for his gratuitous accommodations.”

And leisurely Hans walked toward the jail.

Having procured the keys of the man on duty, he entered the prison.

Bryan heard his approach, and he arose from the rough floor upon which he had been sitting, and prepared for the interview.

Hans Van Kempen fairly shrieked with joy when he discovered that the prisoner was the very man he desired.

He uttered not a word, but closed the door hastily, and upon his egress ordered the guard to be doubled.

“The Gods have favored me!” he exclaimed, as he walked hastily toward his home. “Now shall my vengeance be gratified, and the proud Viola Fordham be humbled.”

He could hardly contain himself.—He rubbed his hands, he chuckled, and experienced all the gratification of a vulgar mind at an advantage over a person that he hated.

“We shall see now!” he cried, “if my power is to be divided, and my charity spurned by a low mendicant—a beggar—a nameless—fatherless—motherless outcast!”

And he gloated over his intended vengeance like a tiger over his fallen victim.

Arrived at his own house, he disclosed his good fortune to Naomi, his

housekeeper. This was equivalent to publishing it upon the housetop, for the servants were at once informed of it.

From thence it spread with rapidity through the settlement.

Bryan Blouday was a prisoner!

Some it startled, and some heard it with indifference.

Hans could not forego the pleasure, the malicious satisfaction of imparting the news to Viola in person. He felt that the pain he would inflict would in a measure compensate him for the insults he had endured at her hands. He hastened to her room, and found her within it.

He at once commenced the grateful task before him.

"You remember our former conversation, doubtless. Then you bid defiance to my power, and dared the storm I warned you to beware of. Now the storm has commenced."

"Really!"

"Bryan Blouday is in my prison."

A blow from an assassin could not have surprised the beautiful girl more than did this announcement.

"How?" she asked, her bloodless lips slightly parted, and her eyes filling with tears.

Hans repeated the announcement with malignant emphasis.

Viola felt that the storm had indeed commenced. She could not reply to her brutal tormentor.

"What say you now?" asked Hans, "do you defy me still? Does your fortitude forsake you?"

Viola's tears fell fast.

"Weep!" he said. "It is the pro-

vince of a woman to shed tears. Had you heeded my warning voice, you might have spared this misery, you might have rejoiced with me!"

"Leave me!" cried Viola. "Both your manner and your person are odious. Leave me!"

"Ha! ha!"

The Patroon laughed deridingly.

"Not so fast, my pretty one. Let me tell you all. Bryan Blouday is not only my prisoner, but he dies. As sure as there is a God above us, he shall be executed!"

Viola uttered a shriek, and before Hans could prevent her, she fell to the floor insensible.

In alarm the ruffian called the maid, and then returned to his library.

It was a long time before Viola recovered, and even then she felt that death would be a relief.

The terrible threat of her cousin rang in her ears, and filled her soul with a sickening fear.

Could it be possible that Bryan was a prisoner?

Carl Knipper, the faithful Carl, was deeply affected when he learned of his young friend's calamity. He immediately refilled his pipe, and as soon as he could avoid observation, hastened to the inn of Peter Schnapps, he seated himself in one corner, sad enough.

By and by the company that was collected on his arrival separated, and he was alone with Peter.

"Have you heard the news?" he asked.

"No."

"Come near me, then. I dare not

whisper above my breath. The very walls have ears." tary prison, destitute of food and drink.

Peter approached his friend.

"Bryan is a prisoner in the jail."

"Great God!" cried Peter, "it is impossible!"

"It is true."

With difficulty Peter could refrain from shedding tears.

"When did this occur?"

Carl informed him.

"Alas! alas!" ejaculated the landlord.

"What shall we do?" asked Carl.

"What can we do?" returned Peter.

"Wait a little," said Carl. "The matter is not ripe yet. Let us first see the disposition that Hans makes of him. Perhaps he may discharge him."

"Yes," said Peter bitterly, "when the wolf discharges the lamb. But how was Bryan taken? I thought he was at Stanwix long ere this. How and where was he taken?"

"I know not."

"Strange!" said Peter, "How can you know that he is taken at all?"

"I learned it from Hans."

Peter's lugubrious face brightened.

"Then perhaps it is a lie, only told by the Patron for some base purpose. I do not credit the report."

Carl insisted upon its truth, and left the inn as sad and sorrowful as he had entered it.

"Poor Viola!" he muttered. "I am sure it will break her heart, and then Bryan will die, even if Hans does not kill him."

Throughout the whole of that day and night, Bryan remained in his soli-

"Curse upon the murderer!" he exclaimed, as he paced his narrow apartment to and fro, "does he intend to starve me into passiveness before I am brought before him?"

The following morning the soldier upon duty furnished him a scanty supply of coarse food.

Soon after he had partaken of the ungrateful repast, a strong guard entered the prison, and he was conducted to the Castle for the purpose of an examination.

Nearly the whole settlement, men, women, and children, were collected about the prison when Bryan emerged, to obtain a sight of their favorite. He was pale, but firm and collected, and a buzz of sympathy and admiration greeted his appearance.

The youth recognized his friends by a graceful inclination of his head, and passed on with the guard.

Peter Schnapps had placed himself close to the door of the jail, in order to speak with his young favorite, but he found it impossible to do so. With the crowd he followed on toward the castle.

At the great gate that opened upon the lawn some confusion ensued. The crowd were determined to pass in with the prisoner and hear the examination, and this the soldiers would not permit.

Order was at length restored, and the people excluded. Entirely unfriended, Bryan was conducted to the presence of Hans.

The Patroon was seated at his library, awaiting the arrival of his prisoner. He received him with a frown, and when order was obtained he said :

“Bryan Blonday! You are arraigned before me on a charge of treason, and of stealing into this settlement at night time, for mischievous purposes! What do you say to it?”

“That it is false!”

“Indeed!”

“Aye! and you know it to be false. I am a resident of this settlement, and was returning to my home, when intercepted by your patrol. It is my privilege to visit the place!”

“Aye! but the treason. Do you deny the charge of treason to his Majesty's government? Are you not a Whig?”

“I do not deny it!”

“And you are a soldier, too, in the rebel army—in arms against the sovereign, for you wear a uniform that I recognise.”

Bryan was silent.

“What do you say to this charge?”

“By what authority do you arraign me?”

“By the authority of my commission as a king's magistrate.”

“Have you a jurisdiction over a charge of treason?”

“If to love my country—to be willing to serve it, and, if needs be, to die for it, is treason, then I am guilty!” said Bryan proudly, folding his arms upon his chest, and gazing scornfully upon Hans.

“Enough!” cried the Patroon.—

“Conduct him to the prison again, and mark me, if he escape, the severest punishment shall be awarded you! Remove him at once!”

The examination was brief.

Bryan felt that he was a doomed man, yet his confidence and his courage did not forsake him.

“His power over me can extend no further than imprisonment,” he said, after his return to the jail, “and it will indeed be curious if I cannot effect my escape from this tenement.”

Bryan Blonday knew the baseness of the Patroon's heart, but he did not know its bitter malignity.

After the departure of the prisoner, Hans paced his room impatiently, apparently in a great quandary.

“Now,” he muttered, “it needs prudent management to make this fortunate capture avail me. If I can work upon the fears of Viola, if she knows that I will sacrifice Bryan, unless she bestows her hand upon me, such is the nobleness, the generosity of her nature, that she would consent to save his life!”

And he pondered deeply on his idea.

“It is worth the trial,” he said. “I can but fail, and shall, even then, lose nothing of my vengeance.”

And when questioned respecting the fate of Bryan, he answered somewhat sternly :

“The punishment of treason is death.”

Viola Fordham knew of her lover's arraignment, knew of the charges that had been preferred against him. When

she learned that he was remanded to the jail, the worst fears of her heart were fully aroused.

Day and night she wept over his fate.

Of Hans she entertained a deep-seated dread. Whether it is that woman can more readily divine the heart of man, or that men are less cautious, or more open and destitute of deceit before them, I know not, but Viola knew that Bryan Blonday was doomed. She knew, also, that Hans would execute him, without regard to the law, and without a twinge of remorse.

What could she do to avert his fate.

She was determined to attempt an interference.

At length her futile invention hit upon a plan, and she resolved to try it.

Only one thought possessed her heart, and that was, the liberation of her lover at all hazards.

She asked an interview of Hans.

The brute laughed.

"Indeed!" he said, "the proud beauty yields already. I feel that I shall succeed!"

Of course he consented to the desired meeting.

Viola was very pale when she entered the Patroon's presence. She had been weeping bitterly, and her eyes were red and swollen.

Hans remarked her appearance, and the evidence of her intense suffering afforded him satisfaction.

"Perhaps!" he thought "she does not think so lightly of my power at this time."

He presented her a chair, and was

remarkably formal and polite, although it was very frigid.

"I have solicited this interview," she said, "in order to effect a compromise with you."

"Really!" said Hans, affecting surprise, "this is a condescension that I did not expect, after what has passed."

"Will you hear my proposals?"

"I will. I will not retort upon the scorn and contempt with which you received my former solicitations."

"Bryan Blonday is your prisoner?"

"There is nothing more certain,"

"Would anything induce you to release him?"

"Would you corrupt me, madam?"

"What mean you?"

"Am I not a king's officer? In this matter with Bryan Blonday, I am not acting upon my individual responsibility. I am a government officer I must do my duty!"

Viola was discouraged, but her determination increased.

"You surely have the power to free him if you choose?"

"Oh! I could do so, to be sure."

"Will you?"

"Woman! you know not what you ask!"

"I ask the freedom of one who never injured you."

"I repeat, that personal matters have nothing to do with this affair."

"Hear me, Hans! You know the extent of my fortune?"

"I do."

"It is in your custody?"

"Yes."

"If you will release Bryan Blon-

day this night, every dollar of it shall be your own!"

This was a tempting offer, a magnificent offer. The eyes of the Patroon glowed under the feelings it excited.

Viola watched his feelings closely, as they were shadowed in his countenance. The hope increased, and she construed his prolonged silence into a favorable consideration of the proposal.

"Is it a bargain?" she asked earnestly.

"If I refuse, I can obtain her hand for the same favor," thought Hans, and he answered:

"I cannot consent."

Viola was disappointed, most grievously disappointed.

"It is all I have!" she said, despondingly.

"Woman!" said Hans slowly, assuming a virtue that he did not possess. "You have mistaken me. I am not the sordid wretch you would believe me to be, not by a vast deal. You seem to be deeply interested in behalf of this young man."

"I am."

"And desire his life?"

"Above my own."

"Now, hear me! It is in your power to save him."

"Oh! mention the terms!" exclaimed the fair girl, eagerly.

"It is for no light consideration that I would venture upon this step—for no gold, no honor."

"Mention the terms."

"They are easy, and perfectly with-

in your reach!"

"Keep me no longer in suspense, but name them."

"Bestow your hand upon me this night, and the next moment Bryan Blunday is free to go where he chooses."

"Oh! God!" exclaimed the agonised girl, clasping her hands and gazing imploringly in the face of her cousin.

"Do you accept the terms?"

"I cannot!" groaned Viola

"Then he dies!"

"Oh, say not so, Hans!"

"I repeat it, he dies!"

Viola wept.

"The price is reasonable;" continued Hans, "and you say the boon is important to your happiness."

"I cannot wed you!" repeated Viola. "I cannot render myself so base in my own eyes. Listen, Hans! You would not want for your wife one whose heart was entirely given to another—one who *could not* love you, who could not return your affection. To consent to this, would be to entail perpetual misery on us both. No, no, Hans, take the fortune, but do not ask my person!"

"I have said," replied Hans, "what I would do, and you may depend on my firmness. Give me your hand at the altar, and Bryan Blunday is free; refuse me and he dies, and you may enjoy the reflection, that you might have saved his life, but would not. Who, then, is his murderer? It is not me!"

These terrible words sank into the

heart of the maiden, like lines of fire. It seemed that her straining bosom would burst, so intensely was her grief excited, but Hans seemed as cold and unmoved, as an iceberg. It was a fearful struggle.

"Time is pressing," said Hans, who saw the impression his words had made, and who knew he had much to gain by delay; "time is pressing, and perhaps you are not exactly prepared to give my proposition a definite reply at this time. For your sake, and as evidence that I respect your feelings, I give you until to-morrow night for thought. In the meantime, I pledge you that nothing shall be done in Bryan's case. At that time I will come for your answer."

This delay was a great relief to Viola. She eagerly embraced it, and with a tottering step she left the room.

How deep and bitter was her grief when she returned to the solitude of her own chamber.

What was life to her without Bryan Blonday? Nay, how miserable, how loathsome would be the life she should lead as the wife of Hans Van Kempen.

In fact, she doubted if Bryan would accept of his life upon such terms. She knew of the ardent, entire, devoted love that he bore her, and did not doubt but he would prefer death to her loss.

Yet could she consent to his execution? She knew that she could save him, and if she refused or neglected to do so, would her own conscience hold her guiltless?

What could she do?

There was but a single alternative "Oh!" she exclaimed eagerly; "if Bryan could escape! If he could be released, it would prove a double rescue: it would remove him from a terrible doom, and me from a horrible dilemma!"

But alas! there was no hope of an escape, no chance for one. He was in a stout prison, and armed men surrounded it

CHAPTER X.

THE SIGNAL LIGHT.

It was somewhat late in the afternoon on the day following Bryan's capture, when a stout, ruby-faced horseman crossed the ford below Van Kempen's Castle, and rode leisurely toward the village. He was somewhat coarsely, yet comfortably clad, and as he passed along the highway, he seemed to scrutinize every object that he saw. The beast that he bestrode was fat and sleek, yet it was not destitute of those unmistakable points that denote both speed and bottom.

As the sentinels of the loyal Patroon were not on duty through the day, the stranger was not challenged, but he went forward without interruption until he finally halted before the door of the village inn.

Here he leisurely dismounted, and throwing the reins to Peter, and ordering his horse to be properly cared for, he entered the bar-room and seated himself.

Several of the neighbors were con

gregated in the bar-room, and their conversation related to the unexpected arrest of Bryan Blonday.

The stranger apparently paid no heed to their discourse. Occasionally he hummed a tune, sometimes he whistled, and as soon as Peter Schnapps returned from his stable, he made a demand for something wherewith to refresh his inner man.

Peter compounded the required beverage, and eyed his guest keenly. He was confident that he had seen the face before, but where, or under what circumstances, he could not tell.

The stranger did not regard the scrutiny with which he was observed. He quaffed his liquor and seemed resolutely bent upon minding his own business, a circumstance somewhat remarkable in these gossiping and inquisitive days.

One after the other of the villagers left the bar-room, and after an hour or thereabouts, the stranger found himself alone with the landlord. He then made several peculiar flourishes with his arms, and Peter, with a most joyous smile, exclaimed :

“ Ah! may the gods be thanked! This is indeed fortunate! I am rejoiced to see you, though I did not recognize you at first. And how are the Blue Brotherhood, one and all?”

“ Hist!” cried the stranger, “ we shall be overheard. Conduct me to a private room, where we can converse.”

Peter at once complied with this request, and led the stranger to a retired back room.

“ Now tell me all about Bryan

Blonday,” he said, seating himself. “ It is upon his account that I am here.”

“ And is the youth one of you?”

“ Yes.”

“ God be thanked for that, for now I know that he is not without friends. He is fortunate.”

And Peter related all that he knew of the capture.

“ Unfortunate indeed!” said the stranger, who was one of the soldiers attached to Bryan’s expedition. “ We waited his return with the greatest impatience in the wood above here, and were finally persuaded that misfortune had befallen him. I have come to devise some means for his assistance. Where is he confined?”

“ In the jail.”

“ Is it a strong place?”

“ A new edifice, just erected.”

“ But it can be forced?”

“ It is strongly guarded.”

“ Indeed!”

“ Yes. Our worshipful Patroon has a squad of red-coats quartered on his premises, and at present they have nothing to do but to guard the prisoner.”

The eyes of the stranger twinkled

“ It will be fine sport, then. Bryan, of course, will not be tamely surrendered by the Blue Brotherhood. Now I must remain here, and yet it is necessary that I should confer with my companions. How can I do this without exciting suspicion?”

Peter mused for a moment, and then answered :

“ I wish you had arrived but a few

moments before. Then one of Bryan's friends was here. I can see him, however, and then we can devise a plan. The village is guarded at every avenue in the night."

"The devil! Of what is the Patroon's suspicions?"

"That he keeps a profound secret. I think, however, that Carl Knipper could take you out in a canoe."

"And who is this Carl Knipper?"

"The Patroon's servant."

"But can he be depended on? In this matter there must not be the chance of mistake."

"I will answer for Carl. He is one of Bryan's firmest friends; a good Whig at heart, though compelled like all of us, to disguise his sentiments. I will answer for his fidelity with my life."

"Then see him by all means. If he will consent to our desires, let him meet me here to-night after dark, and in the mean time, if any inquiries are made concerning me, let it be given out that I am a traveller journeying eastward to my home."

"I will do so," said Peter

And himself and the Blue Brother returned to the bar-room.

The moment that an opportunity occurred, Peter left the inn and hastened to the Castle. He prowled around the walls until he caught a view of Carl, and then drew his attention by a peculiar kind of whistle. In a short time Carl was beside him.

"Good news!" said Peter. "Great news!"

"Tell it," said Carl

"The Blue Brotherhood are determined to release Bryan."

"The Blue Brotherhood!"

"Aye, the lad is one of them."

In a twinkling Carl's short pipe was taken from his mouth, filled with the aromatic weed, and then he busied himself with his flint and tinder.— After he had emitted one or two clouds of the grateful smoke, he said:

"Is it possible?"

"True, and we want your assistance."

"Command me."

"I knew you," said Peter, "you would do anything for Bryan."

"Anything to relieve him of his danger."

Peter then explained the desire of the soldier at his house, to visit his companions in the wood.

"Carl replied:"

"That is easily done. No one suspects their presence in this region.— After dark I will take a boat, and under the old pretence of a fishing voyage, I will come to the little cove at the foot of your garden. Let the soldier meet me there, and I will convey him where he pleases. We can avoid the sentry."

"Admirable!" cried Peter. "I will arrange the matter. Do not fail in your appointment."

"I will not; but you must not expect me until dark. I cannot escape from the Castle before that time."

The friends parted. Carl returned to his avocations, and Peter returned to the inn, to acquaint his guest with his success.

Punctual to the hour, Carl made of men and horses in a cleared space, his appearance in the little cove with at some distance in advance. a light bark canoe, which he managed "Now," said the soldier, turning with the most practical skill. The toward him, "you may halt here. In Blue Brother was awaiting him in my conference I must be alone. Not company with Peter, and as soon as a that I distrust your discretion or your mutual recognition had been brought honesty, but it is one of the rules of about by the mediation of the land- our organization." lord, the soldier seated himself in the Carl expressed himself contented, frail boat, and it shot out into the and seated himself upon a log. stream as noiseless as a phantom. The stranger proceeded to the clear-

"Where are your friends?" asked Carl, when they had gained the middle of the stream.

"I cannot tell exactly in the darkness," was the reply, "we will land upon the north bank, a mile or so above here, and then we will pursue our journey upon the land. I will warrant that none of the Patroon's soldiers will molest us."

Carl plied the oars vigorously, and they effected a landing without any difficulty.

"Now secure the boat," said the Blue Brother, "and we will find my companions."

Carl secured the boat by a rope attached to it, and then proceeded with his companion through the dark woods. The walking was anything but agreeable, and many a fall and thump from overhanging limbs was the reward of the adventurers.

At intervals the Blue Brother halted and uttered a signal.

At length he received an answer.

"That's them," exclaimed the Blue Brother, and he increased his speed, and redoubled his signals.

At length Carl discovered a group

of men and horses in a cleared space, at some distance in advance. "Now," said the soldier, turning toward him, "you may halt here. In my conference I must be alone. Not that I distrust your discretion or your honesty, but it is one of the rules of our organization."

Carl expressed himself contented, and seated himself upon a log.

The stranger proceeded to the clearing.

He had no sooner arrived in the opening than he was surrounded by his comrades, all eagerly enquiring for Bryan.

The soldier related the history of his capture.

A gloomy silence succeeded this announcement.

The companion of Carl was the first to speak.

"Now," said he, "our course is a clear one. You must return to our camp, and acquaint Captain Drake of the youth's calamity. Let him return with the whole command, and then we will assault the prison. I will return to the settlement, where I can tarry unexpected, and watch the progress of events. When you arrive at this place, or hereabouts, halt until it is dark, and then fire a tall dry tree. If all things are in order for an attempt, your signal shall be answered by a similar one, and a guide shall meet you and conduct you across the ford to the settlement."

The soldiers consented to this arrangement.

"Return with the first streak of

dawn, and tell Captain Drake that a delay will be dangerous. The Tory Patroon is malicious and vindictive, and he thirsts for the young man's blood."

The Blue Brothers promised diligence, and the soldier returned to the waiting of Carl.

"Now we will return," he said; "my business is completed. If your master only defers his proceedings for a few days, your friend Bryan Blunday will be saved."

"May the lord grant it,"

And he landed his friend in safety, at the bottom of Peter's garden.

Peter was alone in his bar-room, waiting the arrival of his guest. He listened to the recital of the arrangements that had been made, with a pleased countenance, and retired to his bed, fully determined to see Bryan, when he was removed to the castle for examination.

In this intention the worthy innkeeper was disappointed, as we have already seen.

The Blue Brother continued to abide at the inn, without exciting suspicion. He feigned a sort of comfortable illness as a reason for deferring his journey, though it must be confessed, that his full form and ruddy visage rendered the nature of his distemper somewhat doubtful.

He sauntered through the settlement frequently. With a keen and critical eye he examined the prison, noted its form, its probable strength, and the number of its guards, and their appointments.

He had frequent interviews with Carl Knipper. The worthy servant had already selected a tree, and collected combustibles for the answering signal, in case it should be necessary to use one, and beside, he had consented to go to the lurking-place of the Brotherhood, when they arrived, and conduct them across the ford to the settlement.

He had also rendered himself useful in collecting all the information possible to be secured, regarding the determination of Hans, his master, and the consequent fate of Bryan.

On the day after the interview of Viola with the Patroon, the distressed female sent for Carl. The faithful Sarah Fielding was the bearer of the message, and she conducted the surprised menial to her mistress.

When Carl was in the room she withdrew.

"Carl, my trusty friend," said Viola, "are you yet true to the interests of Bryan, or have your feelings cooled, now that he is a prisoner, and in distress?"

There was a strong expression of scorn on the Dutchman's features as he answered:

"Carl Knipper is poor and humble, but he is no *traitor*! A poor man's bosom can contain a true heart!

Viola saw that the servant was sincere, and she hastened to soothe his feelings.

"I did not doubt you, Carl, yet many that seemed to befriend him in former days, will stand aloof from him

now that adversity has him within its grasp!"

"I am but a poor adviser," said Carl; "but such as I am, I am at your service."

"Is there no way, Carl, by which we can liberate Bryan—can set him free again?"

There was a touching earnestness in the tones of the fair girl, that at once reached the heart of the servant.

He shook his head doubtfully.

"I fear not," he answered.

"Cannot we bribe the jailor—can not we enter the prison and remove him in disguise?"

Carl shook his head.

Viola could not restrain her tears.

"His friends, Carl," she continued. "Has he no friends?"

"Many."

"And are they idle in this awful time. Are they making no efforts for his release?"

Carl was placed in a delicate and painful situation. He had promised the most faithful and honorable secrecy with the Blue Brother, and he dared divulge nothing. On the other hand, he was sorely distressed at the exhibition of Viola's profound grief.

He evaded a direct reply.

"Undoubtedly they will do all in their power. I am not without hope that they will save his life."

"Indeed!" cried Viola, eagerly catching at this consolation, feeble as it was.

"I do hope they will," Carl repeated.

"Tell me *why* you hope so, Carl?"

This was a perplexing question.

"I know the interest they take in

his welfare. I know they are devoted to him, and are not the men to give him up tamely!"

"Would they fight for him, Carl?"

"If it was necessary."

"But they are few, and could not withstand the forces of my cousin Hans."

"Remember," replied Carl, "that the battle is not always to the strong, or the race to the swift"

"True enough, but in this matter, Carl, the heart desires the consolation of certainties."

Viola felt that she must abide the course of events, that she could resort to no schemes by which to frustrate the intentions of Hans. She dismissed Carl, enjoining secrecy upon him—a precaution, by the way, altogether needless.

When he had departed, she again gave herself up to grief, and gloomy forebodings.

The time when she was to give a final answer to Hans, regarding his proposition, was rapidly approaching. As the moments flew past, her agitation and perplexity increased, and she felt that the pains of the rack, or the torments of Pandemonium, would be a relief to her agony.

If she refused to marry Hans, Bryan would doubtless die. If she *did* wed, would not her discretion prove equally palal to her lover? It was truly a desperate and awful alternative!

The increasing gloom in her apartment, warned her that the evening was approaching—the evening that was to

determine her fate. Every footstep that echoed through the halls of the castle, she thought indicative of the approach of Hans, and caused a fearful shudder at her heart. By and by, she wished that he *would* come, in order that an end might be put to the sickening struggle that distressed her.

Hans Van kempen, however, was playing a deep and desperate game, and it did not meet his views to evince any haste in the matter. Indeed, he waited until the evening was somewhat advanced, before he sought his cousin's apartment

At last, he was seated in her presence.

"I have come," he said, in a cold, calculating tone, "to hear the doom of Bryan Blonday!"

A sensation of faintness oppressed Viola, and she could not, at once reply.

"Have you decided?" Hans asked.

With a desperate effort, Viola answered.

"Take the fortune, and my prayers for your welfare, but ask no more!"

"Woman!" replied the Patroon, "this is trifling, and unworthy of you. I have informed you of the terms upon which I will release the prisoner, and they are final. If you wed me to-morrow night, he is free, if you refuse, to-morrow night, he dies!"

"Oh! Hans! Hans! You *cannot* execute him—you *dare* not! It is murder!"

"*Dare not!*" cried Hans, with a scornful sneer. "*Dare* not, madam! I swear by the great God that made

me, that, I will in all things keep ~~my~~ word! If you do not wed me, Bryan Blonday dies, and you seal his death-warrant!"

"Oh! God!" exclaimed Viola, elevating her eyes, devoutly, "relieve me from this agony!"

Hans arose from his chair.

"I thought you had determined," he said, "And would answer me promptly. I see, however, that I was deceived, and that you have used my indulgence toward you, merely for the purpose of tricking. I will take especial care madam, that I am not deceived again. Let me bid you a good evening!"

And he raised the door-latch to depart.

"*Hold!*" almost shrieked Viola.—
"Hold, Hans, do not leave me yet, I beseech you!"

Hans halted.

"Do you decide?"

"I do," answered Viola in a low tone.

"Will you wed me?" asked Hans, himself deeply agitated, and hardly able to stand.

"I will."

Hans returned to his seat.

"To-morrow night, in the chapel?"

"Yes."

"Remember! the moment you are mine, Bryan Blonday is free! but up to the last moment, the arrangements for his execution shall proceed. If you fail, he dies."

And Hans left the room.

"Aye, I will wed him!" exclaimed

Viola, with a tone and air of singular calmness.

"I will wed him, and save the life of Bryan, but the same night *shall see me a corpse!*"

Hans was delighted beyond measure. He retired early to bed but not to sleep.

"My plan has succeeded!" he said.

"I have made her comply with my desires. Viola Fordham, shall be the wife of Hans Van Kempen. Bryan is foiled!"

"There is many a slip, 'twixt the cup and the lip!"

The next day was dark, and lowering. Hans paid no heed to the gloom, but early in the morning, he hastened to the residence of the officiating Priest of the settlement, and requested his attendance at the chapel that evening, to unite him to Viola.

The Priest promised compliance, and the Patroon returned to the castle, to make his preparations.

What a day it was to Viola Fordham!

She was calm, perfectly quiet, but what a change! Every impulse of her soul, every emotion of her heart, every hope, all human feelings, were crushed within her! She had, in fact, but *one* thought, *one* determination, *one* wish

She would save the life of Bryan Blunday, and then die!

The flight of time, she heeded not. When night came, she bid Sarah array her for the sacrifice, and then she awaited the appearance of Hans.

It was not until the darkness had enveloped all things, that she heard his knock at the door.

She bade him enter.

"Are you ready?" he asked.

"Quite."

"The carriage is at the door, let me assist you to descend."

Assuming her bonnet, and throwing a thick veil across her shoulders, she accepted the offered arm of Hans, and descended to the lawn, where a huge old-fashioned vehicle, rusted and tarnished for want of use and care, was drawn up to receive her.

As she was about to enter the vehicle, a bright, lurid glare, shot up in the northern horizon like a column of fire!

The steeds attached to the vehicle started, and were with difficulty restrained by the grooms.

"What is the meaning of that?" asked Hans, somewhat alarmed.

"A bonfire!" replied the servant.

"For what purpose?"

"Doubtless, a rejoicing on your honors approaching nuptials;" replied the servant.

He had scarcely ceased speaking when another flame, more brilliant and fierce than the first, made its appearance but a short distance above them.

"I am certain that it is," continued the servant. "I heard the thing spoken of. By and by the whole settlement will be illuminated!"

The answer satisfied Hans. He assisted Viola into the coach, and it moved off slowly in the direction of the chapel.

CHAPTER XI.

FOZZLE'S JOURNEY.

DURING the stay of the attorney at

Van Kempen's Castle he seemed to have no apparent business but to have sought that region for relaxation from business.

Once or twice he visited Hans Van Kempen, gave him some instructions with regard to his affairs, examined some old manuscripts, and conversed about the country, and, in short, completely established the ideas that he intended, at no distant day, to make the settlement his place of abode.

He was cool, unobtrusive, but particular in his inquiries respecting the settlement and its inhabitants. This seemed natural enough in one who contemplated a residence there, and it excited no surprise, no remark. All his interrogatories were promptly answered.

Above all things, he was particular in his questions regarding Bryan Blonday. Every particular of his life, all his peculiarities of form or conduct he obtained from Fielding, for the good old man delighted to converse about his absent favorite.

All this information Fozzle carefully treasured.

Before the capture of Bryan, he left the country and returned to his home, much to the regret of Peter Schnapps.

"He was a most excellent man!" exclaimed the landlord, "and a royal customer."

When Fozzle reached his home, he retired to the privacy of his own office, and unrolled the note he had taken during his visit to Van Kempen's Castle

"That boy is a noble one. His ser-

vice to me, was one of disinterested magnanimity, and it is deserving of a generous return. Let me see;" he continued, musing. "Montague! Aye, that is the name of the place. Well, to-morrow morning, I will journey to that place. At present I have no business to detain me."

And the following morning saw Fozzle again upon the road, but this time, his journey was eastward, toward the province of Massachusetts. He seemed to have some important visit in view.

At last he arrived at Montague, a small and insignificant hamlet in the province mentioned above; and he forthwith sought accommodation at a little inn, the only one the place afforded.

Such fare as the place produced was cheerfully accorded him by the obsequious Boniface.

It was late in the day, nearly night, when the attorney arrived. His first care, therefore, was for himself and his trusty beast, and after he had partaken of supper, ample, if it was not delicate, he repaired to the bar-room, and commenced a discourse with the landlord.

"Have you resided here for a long time?" he asked.

"Since my boyhood," was the reply.

"Then you must be well acquainted with the inhabitants hereabouts?"

"Intimately."

"Do you know any one of the name of Bellamy?"

"Several."

"One Samuel, I refer to."

"I know him well."

"Does he reside far from here?"

"Some two miles upon the plains."

"Has he a sister?"

"Several of them."

"Do any of them reside with him?"

"One."

"Will you tell me her name?"

"Susan."

"Was she ever married?"

"No—stop—I am mistaken. She was married, but it was a long time ago."

"Fozzle's face brightened.

"Is her husband dead?"

"That I cannot say. For some reason or other, her marriage did not prove happy, and she returned to her home; a few months afterwards, she went away for a short time, but returned again. Since that time she has resided with her brother."

"Do you know her husband's name?"

"I do not."

"And she is yet living!"

"She is."

"I am right, in *one* respect at least," thought Fozzle. "To-morrow I will see her myself."

"Did her husband never visit her?"

"Never."

Fozzle retired early to his bed, and in the morning, after receiving ample directions from the publican, he set out on foot, for the residence of Bellamy.

A pleasant, and not a long walk, brought him to the dwelling, which was small, but neat and tidy in its external appearance, surrounded by

cultivated fields, and other indications of moderate thrift. Without hesitation, Fozzle rapped at the door for admission.

It was opened by a man considerably advanced in years, and of an intelligent and benevolent countenance

Fozzle was invited to enter, and complied with the invitation.

After he was seated, he asked:

"Is this the residence of Samuel Bellamy?"

"It is."

"Is he at home?"

"I am the man."

An awkward pause ensued. Fozzle was at a loss in what manner he should approach his business.

At length he asked:

"Have you a sister Susan?"

Bellamy seemed painfully surprised, but he replied:

"I have."

"It is with her, more particularly, that I would communicate. Is she at home?"

Bellamy's painful hesitation seemed to increase. The attorney observed it and said:

"I can assure you that my business is important, and not at all painful."

Bellamy seemed assured, and said:

"I will inform my sister of your desire."

And he left the apartment.

Now for the decision," thought Fozzle.

"I am certain there is no mistake in the matter."

Bellamy was a long time absent.—Indeed, nearly an hour elapsed before he returned. Fozzle's patience was

painfully wearied, but at length he heard his approaching footsteps.— When he entered the room a tall and yet graceful woman, was leaning on his arm.

The moment the attorney beheld her, he could not restrain his surprise, but cried :

“ I am right ! ”

Both Bellamy and his sister were surprised.

Fozzle hastened to apologise for his rudeness.

The woman before him was probably some fifty years old or thereabouts, though there were many visible traces of early grace and beauty, in both form and countenance. She was one of those persons upon whom time and misfortune appear to leave no trace. She was yet erect and graceful, and although her dark brown hair, was fast approaching an entire greyness, the fire of her dark eye was yet bright.

The lady and her brother seated themselves, and looked at the attorney as if they desired him to proceed with his errand.

Fozzle commenced :

“ I have good reasons for the questions I am about to propose, and should feel obliged if they were answered promptly. This lady, I believe has once been married.”

The woman's face was very pale. Her brother answered:

“ She was.”

“ May I ask to whom ? ”

“ To Abram Van Kempen.”

“ Of Van Kempen's Castle, in the Colony of New York ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ I was certain that I was not mistaken.”

“ You will permit me to ask you, the object of these questions ? ” said Bellamy.

“ In one moment. One unpleasant question from me, and then I will explain all.”

The paleness of the lady still increased.

“ Did you ever know a person of the name of Bryan Blonday ? ”

The lady shrieked and fell, fainting into her brother's arms. Fozzle hastened to his assistance.

A half-hour of confusion and of exertions to re-animate the woman ensued. At the expiration of that time she recovered, and, to the great relief of Fozzle, appeared calm and collected.

“ What know you of Bryan Blonday ? ” she asked.

“ Will you first reply to me ? ”

“ I *did* know Bryan Blonday.”

“ Describe him.”

“ He was an infant when I knew him.”

“ And now he is a man ! ” exclaimed Fozzle. “ Every inch of a man, nay, a nobleman ! ”

“ My God ! ” exclaimed the woman. And her tears fell thick and fast, and her bosom heaved.

“ One question more ; ” said Fozzle. “ Is Bryan Blonday a relative in any manner of Abram Van Kempen's ? ”

“ He is.”

“ What ? ”

The lady hesitated.

"You may as well disclose all!" as would prepare him for the struggle of life. Justice should be done him now."

argued her brother.
"Aye! all;" replied Fozzle

"He is the *son* of Abram Van Kempen."

"And you—"

"I am his mother!"

"It is clear enough;" said Fozzle; "from the moment I saw you, I knew you were his mother."

"And how?"

"The resemblance is distinct."

"What is the end of all this enigma?" asked Bellamy.

"Van Kempen is dead!" replied Fozzle, "and Bryan Blonday is his legitimate heir."

"Van Kempen dead!" repeated the woman.

"Yes, I was present at his estate, a few days before his demise, and I drew up his will."

"But he knew not that Bryan Blonday was his child!" cried the woman eagerly.

"No."

"Did he bequeath his property?"

"Yes, to his nephew. But it was under the impression that his wife was dead, and himself childless."

The tears of the wife were renewed. Fozzle continued:

"In order that justice be done to Bryan, his birth and parentage should be authenticated. He is every way worthy of the fortune that another is unjustly enjoying."

"Aye!" replied Bellamy, "the child has been too long neglected; but it was in consequence of the certainty that he had fallen into good hands, where his moral training would be such

"Most certainly," said Fozzle. "It will be an easy matter. True, the times are somewhat in confusion, and we know not what party will eventually succeed. But the people will regard the right, where and when it is plainly set forth."

"But how can we accomplish this?"

"By visiting our colony, and proclaiming and publishing the truth. This is the only way."

"And how did you come in possession of a clue to this matter? Both myself and my sister supposed the secret to be only with ourselves."

"From particular reasons, I was led to examine some old manuscripts at Van Kempen's Castle, and there I obtained the few facts that have guided me in my search."

"Is Bryan aware of it?"

"No. He has conferred upon me a signal favor, and I have undertaken this search, without his knowledge, as part of a reward I owe him. I did not wish to excite in his young bosom hopes that might never be realised. I did not wish to render him dissatisfied with his present situation, for I knew not but his mother was dead, and all traces of his lineage lost. I, therefore, resolved not to communicate with him until doubt and conjecture had been reduced to certainty."

"You have acted wisely, and for the benefit of the youth."

"Of course there will be no difficulty in proving the marriage, or the birth and identity of the boy."

"None at all."

"Then can I count upon your speedy attention to the business. Delays, you know, as the old saw says, are dangerous."

"Certainly. It shall be promptly attended to. If you will leave us your address, my sister and myself will visit you, and together we will proceed to Van Kempen's Castle."

"In the meantime," said Fozzle, "I will be diligent in preparing the way for our success. With the present occupant of the estate I am on friendly terms, and I will again obtain an examination of the old manuscripts left by Abram. Something may present itself to facilitate our business, and add to our certainties."

Fozzle, as requested, left his address with the Bellamys. He enjoyed a long conversation with them, in regard to Bryan, to marriage, and the separation of Abram and his wife, and then he returned to the inn, a gratified and a happy man.

"It is wonderful!" he exclaimed, as he walked along. "Most wonderful indeed. From my first knowledge of Bryan Blonday, the singular manner in which he was found, the peculiar ring, and the selection of the name, I thought he was the offspring of Abram Van Kempen. It is clear as noon-day now, and he is also legitimate. He will inherit that property too, in spite of its present narrow-minded possessor."

Early in the morning following the interview, Fozzle once more mounted his horse, and set out upon his return.

"I must visit Hans Van Kempen's Castle again," he said, "that is clear

enough. It will gladden the heart of the generous Peter Schnapps to hear of the singular fortune of his favorite, and it will somewhat affect the cause of the king, in that region, if Bryan becomes possessor of the settlement."

And Fozzle smiled, for though a cool and cautious individual, he was a Whig in sentiment.

And when he arrived at Albany, he commenced immediate preparations for a departure up the Mohawk.

In a few days he drew up his horse in front of the inn of Peter Schnapps, and he was forcibly struck with the change that had taken place in the appearance of the settlement.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ILLUMINATION.

FIERCE and bright against the dark, inky sky, gleamed the signal fires! Far and near streamed the steady, glaring light that they emitted, causing the wonder and astonishment of the settlers who thronged the streets, gazing at the singular spectacle.

Higher and higher did the forked flames ascend, and the bright sparks filled the inn with a shower of tiny stars.

The old carriage of Hans rolled up to the door of the chapel, in which a dim light was burning, but the crowd in front and around the edifice prevented Viola from alighting.

"What in the name of fortune is the meaning of these lights?" asked one.

"Why, the Patroon is to be married to-night," replied another.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the crowd

"The Patroon to be married?" asked one.

"Yes."

"To whom?"

"Viola Fordham!"

"Ha! ha!" laughed the questioner, sneeringly. "Tell that again! You had better ask Bryan Blonday!"

"Hist, here is the carriage!"

Viola was sitting in the vehicle, in a state of stupor, when she heard these words.

They stung her to the soul!

"Aye!" she thought, "ask Bryan Blonday, indeed!"

Hans also heard the obnoxious remark. He leaped from the carriage, and in a sharp tone, cried:

"Away! What do you here? Away, I say, and leave the chapel!"

Reluctantly the crowd obeyed him.

He returned to the vehicle, and assisted Viola to alight.

Again did the bright glare of the signal fires dazzle her eyes!

Poor girl! How it would have thrilled her heart, if she could have known the meaning of these mysterious beacons!

She passed into the chapel, leaning upon the arm of the man whom she loathed, and whom she was to marry!

The obedient Priest was seated within the railing of the altar.

Hans hastened up the broad isle, and as soon as he reached the altar, he said:

"Proceed with the ceremony—we are in haste!"

The Priest arose, and commenced the service.

The solemn, measured tones of his voice sounded in Viola's ears like a funeral knell.

When the first signal fire flamed up against the sky, Carl Knipper and the Blue Brother were sitting at the foot of the tall, dried pine, that the former worthy had prepared for an answering signal.

Carl had been relating to the soldier the intended marriage of the Patroon, and he added:

"It will kill Bryan Blonday as surely as the halter of the king!"

"Oh! if they would only come to-night," exclaimed the Blue Brother. "It would be worth a sceptre to spoil this unhallowed match! I feel deeply for my young friend!"

"Perhaps they may come," said Carl.

"But why does this girl consent to the wedding, if she really loves Bryan?"

"To save his life!"

"How?"

"Hans swore he would execute him forthwith, if she did not at once consent to the union!"

"A curse upon him——"

The trooper was interrupted by Carl, who exclaimed:

"*They have come!*"

"True!" yelled the trooper, leaping to his feet, and drawing from his pocket the materials for a light.

"We are not too late!" cried Carl.

In a short time fire was procured, and placed at the base of the pine. As soon as the flames commenced ascending, Carl said:

"Now for the boat."

And they ran to the river bank.

Carl leaped into his light skiff, and cried:

"Now, my good fellow, the time for energy has arrived. I will hasten to your friends, and urge them forward

without delay. You proceed to the chapel at once, and if the accursed ceremony has commenced, interrupt it. You can easily do this, for Carl Knipper has not lived with the Patroon for so many years, without knowing his character. If you maintain your ground firmly, he will not dare to molest you. In a little time you shall have friends at your back."

"Excellent!" cried the trooper.—
"Speed Carl!"

"Pretend to be a relative of the girl's, and forbid the match!" replied Carl, and he dashed his oars into the water, and shot out into the river.

"Who would suspect so much cunning from such a stolid exterior!" exclaimed the Blue Brother, as he turned and walked swiftly towards the settlement.

Occasionally he turned to gaze upon the fires.

"Ah! they blaze gloriously," he exclaimed, his eye kindling with animation. "It is a glorious spectacle."

Through the thronged streets he hastened. Many accosted him, asking the meaning of the lights, but he heeded them not, and passed on towards the chapel.

Discovering the light, he boldly entered the door.

Hans and Viola were before the altar, and the Priest was reading the ceremony.

The Blue Brother stalked at once to the altar.

Hans heard his heavy and determined step, and he turned to gaze upon the intruder.

"Hold!" cried the trooper in tones of

deep and startling accents. "I forbid the union!"

The Priest ceased his reading and looked up in dismay.

"Who are you, that interrupts the sanctity of this place thus irreverently?" asked Hans, pale as the snow, and deeply enraged.

"You will know presently," replied the trooper. "At present content yourself with the knowledge that this accursed purpose will not be accomplished. I forbid the union!"

"Proceed!" cried Hans sternly, turning towards the Priest, and grasping Viola's arm tightly.

"At your peril!" said the trooper, eyeing the pale face of the preacher
"At your peril!"

The Priest was silent.

"Do you not hear me!" Hans almost roared. "I repeat to you, proceed with the ceremony. What right has this wretch to interfere with my affairs? Complete the ceremony."

"Not another word!" said the trooper, drawing from his bosom a long knife, the bright blade of which flashed in the dim lamp-light. "This woman is already the wife of another in the eyes of Heaven and of earth. She is forced into this mockery of a proceeding by the artifices and falsehood of Hans Van Kempen. I will not permit the sacrifice."

"And who are you!" thundered Hans, fearfully enraged, and trembling lest he should yet be foiled in his plans.

"Answer me, who are you?"

The clear strains of a bugle, soft and mellowed by the distance, stole through the half-lighted chapel, and died away

in gentle cadence in the surrounding wood.

The eye of the Blue Brother instantly brightened, and a smile of confident assurance lit up his features.

"I am your prisoner's friend, *your master*; I am one that stands between you and your victim!"

Hans felt that the rage that boiled within was impotent. The tall, athletic form of the trooper, the glance of his eye, and the gleaming weapon in his hand, were conclusive testimony that he was not to be trifled with. A heavy pressure upon his arm, and the gradual sinking of her form, told him that Viola had fainted.

The mind of Hans was prompt and subtle in emergencies. He raised the form of the girl in his arms, placed it within the altar, and then rushed to the door of the church, where a party of his servants were standing.

He cried:

"Arouse my friends, and bid them hasten to the chapel. Run at once for a file of soldiers. Here is treason in our midst."

The mandate of the imperious Patroon was obeyed. A file of soldiers were called, and in a little time the chapel was again surrounded by the gaping settlers.

As soon as Hans departed for the door the trooper unceremoniously entered the altar, and bore from thence the body of Viola. He removed it to a distant corner of the room, laid it gently upon a seat, and said:

"Poor girl! she has fainted. I will not attempt to restore her, for it is better that she remain insensible during the scene that is to follow!"

Through the singular colloquy we have attempted to depict, the emotions of Viola had been deeply varied. At first she paid no heed to the interruption, for she was nearly insensible. Indeed, she did not comprehend a word uttered by the Priest.

By and by, as the altercation was higher, her drooping energies seemed to arouse and she listened.

The first words that she understood was the annunciation of the trooper.

"I forbid this union!"

"Great God!" she thought, "in this dark and bitter hour thou hast not deserted me, or given me over to death."

Thoughts of earth, of life, of hope, of happiness crowded thick and fast upon her mind.

Was it possible that she should be saved, that the sacrifice of both herself and Bryan would be prevented?

With a painful and absorbing interest she listened to the farther parley.

Gradually her interest in the event increased. She ventured to look upon her strange and daring champion, and his whole demeanor showed her that he was not one to deal in frivolities. His very face spoke of firmness and determination.

She felt the grasp of Hans upon her arm, felt that he trembled. Once she cast a furtive glance upon his features, they were pale and troubled. The sudden preponderance of hope was too much for her to bear.

The objects in the chapel danced before her eyes, the voices sounded husky and confused, and at last she felt her limbs yielding beneath her.

Soon she was insensible.

A file of soldiers of the prison guard-

were promptly brought to obey the call of Hans Van Kempen.

They rushed into the church, and finding it nearly deserted, enquired the reason of the summons.

Hans pointed to the erect and swelling form of the Blue Brother, and rapidly explained the nature of his interruption.

"Let the ceremony go on!" cried the leader of the soldiers. "We will protect you and the bride."

Hans again approached the altar.

To his surprise he discovered that Viola was not there.

"Where is the maiden?" he asked.

With a trembling finger the Priest pointed to the form of the Blue Brother. Hans understood the motion, and conscious of his superior force, he approached the soldier, and in a menacing tone said:

"Release the girl, and away!"

"Back!" cried the Blue Brother, in a sharp, fierce voice. "I have released her from the jaws of the wolf, and with my life I will protect her. Stand back!"

Hans saw the flash of the dangerous weapon in the trooper's hand. He turned toward the soldiers.

Just then the bugle sounded in his ears once more. This time the strain was more full, more prolonged, and of startling nearness.

Again the Blue Brother smiled confidently.

"What is that?" asked the wondering Hans.

A faint hurrah, seemingly intercepted by the distance, and obstructed by inequalities in the ground, followed the sound of the bugle.

Hans was surprised, and for a moment there was the silence of death in the little chapel.

Presently Hans heard the murmuring of the crowd without the church, and gathering his scattered courage, he pointed to the Blue Brother, and cried:

"Away with him! Confine him in the prison with Bryan Blonday. One gallows shall serve them both!"

The trooper laughed contemptuously.

"Bravo! thou pigmy lord of small power! Call up your menials! Bid them advance, but oh! most puissant and worthy hero, beware of the Blue Brotherhood!"

Again the bugle blast swept by, shrill and full, and close upon its dying swell came the heavy swell of a hundred voices.

"Hurrah for Bryan Blonday!"

"Down with the oppressor!"

Viola had recovered from the partial swoon. She heard the sounds, and rising from the seat upon which she had been reclining, she grasped the arm of the trooper, and asked:

"What means this mysterious noise?"

Before the soldier could reply, the cry again arose.

"Hurrah for Bryan Blonday!"

And now fully distinct could be heard the clatter of a troop of horsemen.

Viola clung in affright to the firm, muscular arm of the trooper.

"Fear not, gentle one!" he said. "The voice proceeds from your friends—those who have come to save you."

And the overjoyed girl muttered a prayer of thankfulness for her timely deliverance.

Hans Van Kempen trembled in every limb. He grasped the top of a pew to sustain himself, and the distortions of his coarse and sinister features were almost frightful. He felt that he had failed upon the very point of success. In a faint, husky voice he cried :

“We are betrayed! To the prison, men!”

“Huzza for Bryan Blonday!”

“Huzzah!” answered the crowd around the chapel.

“Hasten,” cried Hans, who saw that the soldiers seemed indisposed to obey him.

The bugle notes drowned his voice.

“Are you cowards! Follow me! Bryan Blonday shall be executed this moment!”

And he rushed out of the chapel, followed by the red coats.

“Huzzah for the Blue Brotherhood!”

“Huzzah for Bryan Blonday!”

“Down with the oppressor!”

These shouts sounded awfully distinct in the darkness, and filled the chapel.

“Huzzah for Bryan Blonday!” shouted the trooper, unable to restrain his enthusiasm.

The Priest hastily put off his robes, seized his hat and departed for his home.

“I should join my friends,” said the Blue Brother, turning to the excited girl behind him, “but I will not leave you. The faithful Carl Knipper will conduct them to the prison.”

A rifle volley that echoed far through the wood followed this announcement, and then the shout:

“Huzzah for the Blue Brotherhood?”

“Down with the prison!”

A straggling discharge of musketry, shots, yells, and the trampling of horses followed.

Viola knelt down beside her comrade. The trooper saw from the motion of her lips that she was in prayer.

The heavy night breeze swept in at the open door of the chapel, and the light was extinguished.

Still the girl started not, but continued her devotion.

After a short space of comparative tranquility, one or two discharges of fire-arms followed, in which loud shouts were mingled. Then could be heard a succession of blows from some heavy instrument.

“They are storming the prison!” shouted the trooper.

“God grant them success!” exclaimed Viola.

And the rapid blows continued.

They ceased at length, and the shout again arose:

“Huzzah for Bryan Blonday!”

“Huzzah for the Blue Brotherhood!”

These yells of defiance were answered by a faint and seemingly distant shout:

“Huzzah for Hans Van Kempen and the king!”

The trooper laughed derisively.

“The poor fools,” he said, “this display of royalty may gratify their dolt of a master, but it will avail them naught.”

“It may!” exclaimed Viola. “The Tories are numerous here, and your friends may need every arm. I will detain you no longer, my generous but unknown friend; I will leave the chapel.”

“But whither? Beware of Hans.”

“I know a place of safety. There is

a house near at hand where I shall be protected."

"Where?"

"Edward Fielding's, the god-father of Bryan."

"I will accompany you."

"It is needless, in the darkness I shall escape."

"I am resolved," replied the trooper, "remonstrance is useless. Let us hasten!"

And with Viola he left the chapel.

As they emerged into the open air, the shout greeted them:

"Huzzah for Bryan Blonday!"

The trooper seized the arm of the maiden.

"Now," he said, "you must be the guide. I will only act as your guard, for I am a stranger."

In the dark street, the shouts and confusion of the melee sounded terribly distinct, and Viola clung, terrified, to the arm of her protector. She pointed toward the cottage, but neither her hand or the designated object was visible, and he said hurriedly,

"This way! let us hasten! Alas! what a night of horrors!"

They walked on toward the cottage as rapidly as the darkness would permit them. It was at no great distance, and they soon arrived there. A bright light glimmered through the windows.

The trooper knocked at the door.

Fielding, pale and agitated, obeyed the summons.

"A young lady needs your protection," said the Blue Brother.

Viola approached the door.

"Welcome in God's name!" cried Fielding, with an earnestness of tone that expressed his sincerity.

Viola entered the cottage.

Before she was aware of it, the trooper had disappeared in the darkness, and was hastening toward the scene of strife.

The beacon fires had died away, and all was darkness. But few were in the streets, the majority of the inhabitants having fled to their houses on the first discharge of fire-arms.

A few of the more hardy and resolute were collected around the prison, upon the heavy doors of which the Blue Brotherhood were at work, having driven the affrighted red coats within the high wall that surrounded the castle.

Just as the trooper reached the prison, a heavy crash, and a deafening cheer, announced that the door had fallen.

"Huzzah for Bryan Blonday!" he shouted, dashing through the circle of bystanders and joining his comrades.

"Hurrah for Bryan Blonday!" shouted his comrades in reply, and in a few moments the liberated youth was in their midst.

Again the air was filled with victorious exultation.

Bryan was free.

"Down with the dungeon, it is the ensign of tyrants!" cried one.

"Burn it!" shouted another.

And a dozen firebrands were speedily procured, and piles of dried limbs heaped around the devoted edifice. A fire was soon kindled, and the Blue Brotherhood extended themselves in a circle around the smoking pile.

The resinous wood of which the prison was composed, soon ignited, and the building was soon enveloped in the folds of the consuming element. A bright

light filled the streets, and even danced in broad and trembling streaks across the bosom of the river.

"Now retreat to the shadow of the wood," cried Captain Drake, who, with Bryan Blonday beside him, had witnessed the commencement of the conflagration. "The cowardly Tories and red-coats will undoubtedly fire upon us, with this bright light to direct their aim."

This hint was wisely promulgated, for, as the troopers were quitting the spot, a volley greeted them from the Castle-yard, but it was ill-directed, and fell harmless.

Before the discharge could be repeated, the troopers were completely sheltered from observation.

Meanwhile the burning of the prison progressed. As the danger of a universal skirmish had abated, the inhabitants once more flocked to their doors, and into the streets to gaze upon the illumination.

Peter Schnapps could hardly contain himself. As his bar-room was filled with his neighbors, many of whom were violent Tories, he dared not display his exultation then, but he mounted to his chamber, where, all alone, he danced and capered for joy.

"Down with the old fabric," he cried. "It is a disgrace to the settlement, a nuisance, a Whig trap. May the Lord ever prosper the Blue Brotherhood, the gallant lads."

And Peter laughed and kept his eyes upon the sinking pile.

"Labor in vain," he said, rubbing his hands. "I wonder if Hans Van Kempen will erect another. No doubt that the Blue Boys will as willingly

destroy it. Bryan Blonday is free, too and the wedding (oh! the devil take the mockery) is postponed."

As soon as the troopers were congregated in the skirts of the wood, and it was ascertained that all were present, Captain Drake said :

"Now, lads, we will mount and return. By our rules, we commit no murder, and molest no private property. As deeply as this foolish Patroon has injured one of our number, we will turn him over to his own conscience, if he has any, merely promising to keep a sharp eye upon him for the future. Perhaps he may take warning from the lesson that we have just taught him."

The suggestion of the captain was speedily followed, and the Blue Brotherhood left the village, in the direction of the fort.

As they passed the chapel, they could not forbear another shout :

"Huzza! for Bryan Blonday!"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SECOND PRISON.

WITH a heavy heart, Bryan Blonday was compelled to follow his companions.

True, he was rejoiced to obtain his freedom, rejoiced to be placed once more beyond the influence of Hans Van Kempen; but he *did*, ardently, most ardently, desire an interview with Viola Fordham!

Time was pressing, however, and it could not be. Like the heart of every lover of youth and ardor, his was obliged to content itself with picturing sometime in the future, when he should

meet her, to part with her no more. The farther the distance that he left her behind, the more dear and consoling did this prospective view appear.

Except for the refreshment of the men or the horses, the Blue Brotherhood did not halt until they again reached camp. Here they resolved upon a lengthened repose, in order to prepare themselves for the expected service at Fort Stanwix.

The rage of Hans Van Kempen was positively furious when he left the chapel and rushed toward the jail. He found the streets filled with strange armed men, and his friends, as he supposed the populace to be, had taken to their beds with most extraordinary activity.

Where was Viola Fordham?

Above all other questions, this one haunted him. Where was she? Had she gone with Bryan Blonday? Had she followed the vagabond fortunes of the man she loved so blindly?

To discover the truth he called his *trusty* Carl, and, after a short conference, that capital rascal was dispatched to ascertain the maiden's whereabouts, while Hans waited for his return.

In the midst of his reflections a servant announced that Fielding desired an interview.

"Show him up," said Hans.

"What is your business?" asked Hans, sternly, as Fielding entered.

"I come from Viola Fordham."

Hans started! "Go on!"

"She requested me to visit you, and return her thanks for your former hospitality, and she desires you to send her her wardrobe, in charge of her maid, and a sum of money sufficient for a year's sustenance."

"Where is she?" he asked.

"At my house."

"Ah! What are her intentions?"

"I do not know."

Hans was thoughtful.

"Tell her," he said at length, "that her request will be complied with to-

day. I would immediately do so, but at present and for a few hours to come, I am engaged busily."

Fielding bowed and departed.

"*Found?*" exclaimed Hans, when he was alone. "Not yet am I entirely deserted by fortune!" And he laughed.

And he paced the room.

"Of course I will send her the wardrobe, or, what is the same thing precisely, I will bring her to the wardrobe!" It is only reversing the terms, and she can not complain!"

Hans sent for the captain of his soldiers. When the man made his appearance, he said:

"Proceed with a file of men, at once, to the cottage of Fielding, the laborer, arrest Viola Fordham, and bring her before me!"

The soldier departed upon his chivalrous errand.

"By the Gods," cried Hans, "this matter is not determined yet. I have still another chance!"

With the utmost patience he awaited the return of the officer. In the interim, he reflected, as well as his perturbed mind would admit, upon his line of conduct.

Some clamor in the yard arrested his attention, and he moved quickly to the window.

The soldiers had returned. Viola was with them, and in a few moments she was in her cousin's presence, whereupon Hans ordered the departure of the soldiers.

"Well, madame," he said, turning to the girl, "will you be seated? Our business demands a conference!"

More from necessity, than a compliance with this cavalier request, she seated herself.

"We were interrupted last night!"

"Of course you expected it."

"I did not."

"Do you mean to say that you knew nothing of the Blue Brotherhood, until their arrival?"

"I do."

"Then you were sincere in your intentions toward me?"

"I was."

Hans was surprised.

"Then, you intended to wed me?"

"I did."

"*Dearest Viola!*" he exclaimed, passionately, deceived by the manner and language of his cousin, and impelled by one of those sudden bursts of passion, not uncommon in men of his mental organization, "I have most truly misjudged you, and for so doing I solicit your pardon. Accept this kiss as my earnest token of repentance!"

And he attempted to salute her.

Viola recoiled from him in horror!

"You mistake me, Hans Van Kempen!" she said firmly. "Let me explain. Last night I intended to do as I promised. I would have consented to our union, I meant no deception. Now the circumstances are changed——"

"And——," interrupted Hans.

"Hear me!" continued Viola, with a gesture of impatience. "Now the circumstances are changed. Then I was *compelled* by the force of circumstances, and your blood-thirsty cruelty, and was not acting from my own free choice. *Now* you *cannot* fulfil your stipulations, made with me, and which was the consideration that moved me to accept your offer."

"How mean you?"

"You can not restore Bryan Blonday to liberty!"

"But he is free!"

"Aye, but not through your agency. You even left me in the chapel to hasten to his execution!"

"Beware," cried Hans, his rage again excited most fearfully. "This is contemptible subterfuge!"

"It is right."

"Do you refuse to wed me now?"

"I do."

So intense was the passion of the Patroon, that for a few moments he

could not speak a word. He glared upon the woman before him like a fiend, and seemed upon the point of seizing her.

Viola remained firm, but pale.

"You are resolved?" Hans asked.

"Firmly!"

"Then I will incarcerate you! You shall not again breathe the pure air of heaven, until you consent to be my own. I swear by the God above us you shall never *wed* Bryan Blonday!"

"Force cannot move me!" cried Viola. "You have no control over my person and dare not restrain my liberty!"

"We will see!" cried Hans, and he left the affrighted girl in the library, securing the door behind him.

He at once sought out the captain of the soldiery, and, after a long conference, returned with him to the library. The end of which conference was Viola's transportation, under escort, to a wild village far up in the mountains, with only the faithful Sarah Fielding for a companion. A few soldiers remained near to act as watch and guard over her.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LAWYER'S GAME.

LET us return to Fozzle, the attorney.

We have stated that the lawyer rode up to the door of Peter Schnapps' inn, and was struck by the alterations in the settlement. Well he might be.

The streets were filled with the blackened remnants of the prison, and groups of the inhabitants were congregated on the corners, yet conversing upon the sudden and unexpected onslaught of the Blue Brotherhood. The order and quiet that had formerly prevailed in the little village seemed to have taken flight, and a spirit of restlessness and discontent had usurped its place.

Peter Schnapps discovered his old customer, gazing about him in surprise,

and he recognized him at once. He proceeded to the door with a remarkable suppleness of limb, and seized the reins of the lawyer's animal.

"You are welcome back!" he said "Shall I assist you to alight, and take possession of your horse?"

The Attorney returned these civil salutations, and descended from the saddle.

He resigned his horse to the care of the landlord, and entered the inn, deferring the numerous questions that pressed upon his mind to a time presenting more leisure.

Peter Schnapps was always anxious to be the first and foremost to impart important news. He therefore hastened to stable the jaded quadruped entrusted to his care, and then he returned to the bar-room, where his guest was seated. To his great delight, no one was present,

"We have had strange doings since your absence," said Peter, at once referring to the subject nearest his heart.

"Indeed! Pray give me the history."

"That I will," said Peter, "after I have prepared your honor something to refresh your weary body. Strange things, indeed, have happened, and you will be surprised to hear them."

And Peter prepared the attorney a draught of liquor from his well-stored bar.

"Now for the history," said the attorney, when he had emptied the capacious tankard.

With great earnestness and not a little eloquence, Peter detailed the narrative of Bryan's capture, and his subsequent rescue by the Blue Brotherhood.

Fozzle was surprised.

"In God's name!" he said, "this Patroon of yours carries matters with a high hand. Is he insane?"

"Mad as a March hare!" exclaimed Peter.

"Well, well," replied Fozzle carelessly, "to-morrow, when I have rested from fatigue, I will visit him, and then I can ascertain this fact for my own satisfaction."

Peter affirmed his former opinion.

"I am rejoiced, however, that the youth escaped; yet just at this time I much desired to see him."

"Indeed!"

"It was the main object of my journey hither."

"He is far away ere this, with the Blue Brothers. They scour the land from end to end, wherever a blow can be struck for liberty. It is unfortunate."

"It is indeed," said Fozzle. "I have important information for his consideration."

"Really!" cried Peter.

The worthy landlord desired to know this information, or at least the nature of it, but Fozzle did not explain, and he dare not enquire. For once, he was at fault.

The attorney, after a somewhat lengthy discussion, ordered a supper, and Peter hastened to order its preparation.

When Fozzle was alone, he said:

"It is unfortunate, sure enough, but perhaps his presence will not be needful. An examination will soon inform me."

Early the next morning, Fozzle presented himself at the castle. He was

politely received by Hans, and was at once conducted to the library.

"Business of an unpleasant nature has called me here," said Fozzle.

"Affecting me?" asked Hans.

"Somewhat."

"Then it would be proper for me to know the nature of it?"

"Certainly."

"I am all attention."

"To say the truth," Fozzle replied, "I fear, after all my precautions, that there is a sad mistake with regard to the will of your deceased uncle. I am so firmly impressed with this belief, that I have come here to satisfy myself."

"Indeed," said Hans; "and in what manner can you ascertain if all this is right?"

"Only by a careful and rigid examination of the papers and manuscripts left behind."

"They are all preserved fortunately," said Hans, "and if you choose, we will devote this day to their examination. I cannot imagine anything out of place in the affair, however. My uncle has always designed me from my infancy for his sole heir."

"Quite probable," replied Fozzle, "yet you know that under some circumstances, he could not do so."

"Only in case of children of his own? I believe."

"That is one instance."

"But such is not the case. My uncle died childless, although he was formerly married!"

"There are other instances," replied Fozzle evasively, "and the only way in which the matter can be determined, is by the examination. It is my desire

that ample justice should be done, in a matter so important. Justice injures no one!"

"True," replied Hans, "and we will examine the documents."

Fozzle assented.

"The papers, parchments, and documents of the deceased Abram were produced, and an examination that continued several days, was commenced. Fozzle examined document after document, with the utmost professional keenness, and every day his confidence increased, for he saw that Hans could not produce a particle of evidence to throw a doubt upon the marriage of Abram, or the legitimacy of Bryan.

"It cannot fail," he would mentally exclaim. "The success of my young friend is certain!"

At length the examination was concluded.

With great anxiety Hans asked:

"Well, is it all right?"

"All right," replied Fozzle; but Hans did not observe the singular earnestness with which he spoke. "It is all as it should be."

"Then you are satisfied?"

"Perfectly! In fact not only satisfied, but highly gratified. I do not grudge my journey!"

Hans breathed freer. He was not without his fears when Fozzle announced his errand, for he knew the attorney to be a keen and critical man. Now he was easy.

After the examination of the documents, Fozzle returned to the inn.— There he fell into a long fit of musing.

"It must be so. Courts are precarious, uncertain, vexatious I will

place the matter before the House of Delegates. They will speedily decide it, and their acts will be substantiated by posterity, for God will not permit this hallowed effort for freedom to fail. It is not necessary for me to confer with Bryan Blonday, for he is yet a minor. In a few days, his mother and his uncle will arrive in Albany!"

So the attorney resolved to return the following day, and he informed the worthy Peter Schnapps of the fact.

"And without seeing Bryan?" exclaimed the innkeeper.

"That is impossible."

"Just at present, I will admit it is, but perhaps he will venture here once more."

"But my time is somewhat valuable, and I cannot wait upon uncertainties," returned Fozzle.

"You will visit us again, then."

"Undoubtedly, and then I hope to be the bearer of good news to my fellow Whigs hereabouts."

"Then the Lord hasten your return!" said Peter.

And Fozzle returned to Albany on the following day, much to the annoyance of Peter, who had not been able to ascertain the nature of his business with Bryan Blonday!

Fozzle arrived at Albany, and to his great joy he found Bellamy and his sister at his house.

He informed them of the object of his errand to Van Kempen's Castle, and told of his success.

The House of Delegates, as the Whig legislature of the colony was termed, were then in session. To the most of the members, Fozzle was known as a sound and efficient attorney, and

as one devoted to the cause of independence. Any matter originating with him, therefore, was like to meet with a considerate and respectful attention.

Fozzle did not delay his proceedings for a moment. He carefully prepared a history of the matter, backed it up by incontestible proofs, and urged the immediate action of the council upon it.

Bellamy and his sister remained at his house, in order to ascertain the decision of the important matter.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RESCUE.

THE spring and the summer of 1777 passed away, and October, with its parti-colored foliage, its withered flowers, and rich luscious fruits, appeared.

One bright, warm day, not less beautiful with its soft, balmy air, and gentle calmness, than its sister of the summer, Peter Schnapps, our worthy landlord, and Carl Knipper, with his short black pipe in full blast, were seated in a little garden, immediately in the rear of the inn. They were engaged in an earnest conversation.

"And do you say that you have seen her?" asked Peter, gazing at his companion in surprise.

"I do, certainly!"

"But where?"

"In one of the awfulest, nay the ———est heathen wigwams that you ever saw, many miles from here!"

"But how did you discover her?"

"I wormed the secret of her abiding place from one of the soldiers that assisted to conduct her there. Hans Van Kempen, the black-hearted villain, never disclosed it!"

"It is wonderful strange!" said Peter.

"How did you get there without being missed by Hans?"

"You see," said Carl, shaking the ashes from his pipe, "as soon as I heard where the poor girl was, I was determined to see her. I had set my heart upon it, for she was always so kind and gentle, that I took to her like a duck to the water. So I pretended to Hans that I desired to go upon a fishing excursion for several days, and he granted me the privilege. Well, I set out at once!"

"The devil!" ejaculated Peter.

"Yes, it *was* the devil! Such a road! And when I got there, such a *hovel*!"

"Possible?"

"Possible! I tell you, Peter Schnapps, it's the ———est place in the woods, and that poor girl is dying!"

"How did she receive you?"

"I wish you could have seen her!" cried Carl. "You see, I dared not appear there in public on account of the — — red coats. So I skulked about in the woods until I saw her one day leave the cottage with Sarah. Then I followed them into the wood, and when I came to a convenient place I disclosed myself."

"And she rejoiced?"

"Rejoiced, you would have thought me her father. She fell into my arms, and she cried like a baby. Indeed, Peter, I could not help it, and I cried with her."

"I would have cried too," said Peter, "had I been there."

"In course you would. You couldn't help it no more than I could. I declare I hardly knew her, she is so pale and wasted."

Peter brushed the corner of his eye with his jacket sleeve. There was an unusual moisture there.

"What did you tell her?"

"Tell her! I talked with her as long as I could, and then I met her again the next day. I said all I could

to console her, and make her feel like herself again!"

"And did you succeed?"

"At last I did; but it was only when I promised her, most solemnly, that, dead or alive, I'd take her out of that place."

"And you promised her?" cried Peter.

"I did."

"And I'll assist you. D——n Hans Van Kempen. I've choked down my principles long enough, and now I'll be a man, let what will come of it. I tell you, Carl Knipper, I am with you."

"I knew you would," exclaimed Carl, triumphantly. "I told her you would; and she expects it."

"And she shall not be disappointed."

"Never."

"How can we do it?"

"I've thought the matter over," said Carl, "and I've planned it all out. We can do it."

"Explain."

And the two worthies proceeded to arrange for the grand *coup*. A boat with a good store of provisions was provided. Up the river they went in this, to the spot where the road to the village of imprisonment left the stream bank. There they secreted their craft for further use, and started on foot over the dreary and painfully rough path up over the hills.

"Didn't I tell you," said Carl, turning to Peter, who was grumbling at the perversity of the rugged and tortuous way, "didn't I tell you it was the devil?"

"Aye, my worthy friend, and you did not lie."

"Never mind, Peter," Carl continued, "all the good things of this life are only attainable by toil."

"Oh, you are a philosopher," puffed the landlord, wiping the perspiration from his brow.

"Something of a one. But keep your courage, man; to-morrow we will

have the gal."

And the comrades steadily pursued their journey.

It was near the dawning of another day ere they came within sight of the clearing. Then Carl, who was in advance, halted, and pointing to the dingy rabins, exclaimed :

"Look there, Peter."

And the landlord looked.

"I see nothing," he said.

"Not there, but yonder."

"Oh!—aye."

"Well, that's the gal's quarters."

"It can't be."

"It's the truth."

"But Carl——"

"No buts about the matter. If she is not dead, she's there—there in one of them wigwams."

Peter was surprised.

"We cannot give her the signals to-night."

"No."

"Then we will secrete ourselves."

"Yes, and sleep until the sun rises. But first of all let me approach the hut occupied by Viola, and leave a mark that she will recognise. You remain here."

And Carl cautiously approached a clump of bushes near one of the small windows of Viola's cabin, and from a twig he suspended a very small white cloth with which he was provided.

"That'll tell her the story—that's an eloquent document," he muttered as he returned to Peter.

"Come," he said to the landlord, "now follow me, but be careful of the dried brush; we must now be cautious."

And Carl led his companion to a

small narrow ravine, some half a mile beyond the clearing.

"You see," he said, "I know this place in particular. I've slept here, and the lodgings were not uncomfortable, and we'll try em again. It don't matter a great deal where a weary man sleeps."

The jaded landlord assented to this assertion at once. The companions accordingly seated themselves and slept soundly until morning. Then they awoke and partook of some of the provisions with which their pockets were amply stored.

Whilst they were partaking of their food in the ravine, Viola and her maid were quitting their couches in the cabin.

The maiden was indeed wan and thin, as Carl had said. There was no bloom upon her cheek, no fire in her eye, no red upon her lips. She was languid, drooping, spiritless!

"Sarah," she said, "look at the bush again, though it will add but another disappointment to those I have already endured. Poor Carl! he has a feeling and a true heart, yet in this instance I fear he has promised more than he can perform."

"You are despondent," replied Sarah. "I would risk my life upon Carl, and I am sure he will not fail us. Something has occurred to detain him, but he will be here."

"Perhaps he may," said Viola, "but it was plain enough from her tones that hope did not animate her.

As soon as Sarah had completed her very simple toilet, she ran to the clump of bushes.

Almost weeping from an excess of

joy, she hastened back to the cabin, bearing Carl's signal with her.

She threw herself into a chair, exclaiming :

"They have come! Here is the signal."

And she held up the white rag.

A violent trembling seized Viola. The blood rushed back upon her heart, and she sank down upon the side of her bed, murmuring .

"God be thanked! I am not yet deserted!"

"Did I not tell you Carl was true?" cried Sarah triumphantly. "I knew he would not desert us!"

"I did not doubt his disposition," replied Viola, "only his ability. He is here, and I am rejoiced."

"And I, too," said Sarah. "If we can only escape from this wretched and lonely place; I would bid defiance to Hans Van Kempen and his guard of British soldiers."

"But whither can we fly?" asked Viola, "the question has occurred to me for the first time."

"No doubt but Carl has provided a place. It must have been an important consideration in his plans."

Viola thought of Bryan Blonday, but then her maiden modesty recoiled at the bare thought of applying to him for protection.

"Let Carl decide it," she said, "I will cheerfully trust to his arrangements, as I have often done before."

With the utmost alacrity, Sarah set about preparing the morning meal. Viola assisted as far as in her power, but after the food was provided she partook but sparingly.

She could not think of physical wants. Her heart was too full. There was an opportunity for escape at hand.

The meal was therefore a very brief one. As soon as it was over, Sarah proposed a departure for the ravine, for there they had agreed to meet Carl, but Viola, though equally impatient as her servant, had more discretion.

"Not yet," she said, "we must carefully avoid all conduct that would excite suspicion of our guard, if we mean to succeed. We will remain in the cabin until our usual time of walking out."

A moment's reflection convinced Sarah that this was the proper course, and she readily assented.

But the time hung heavily upon the hands of both. Anxiously did they watch the sun in its progress, and it was with feelings of joy that they saw it approach their usual hour for exercise.

"Now," said Viola, putting on her bonnet and shawl with trembling eagerness, "we will visit Carl."

And they left the cabin and walked leisurely toward the ravine, occasionally while in sight of the clearing stopping to pluck a hardy fall flower, or to examine with great apparent minuteness some fragrant shrub.

In this manner they passed on, almost unobserved, and reached the wished-for spot without exciting a suspicion.

"God bless your little souls," exclaimed Carl, starting up eagerly, and forgetting his discretion in the intensity of his excitement. "Then you have discovered the signal. You have tarried so long, that I was fearful you had not observed it, or that it had been misplaced."

Viola explained the cause of their delay.

"Well thought of," cried Carl. "I could not have managed the matter better had I been with you."

"You are complimentary," said Viola.

"Not at all," said Carl; "but answer me quickly. Has your courage failed, or are you yet determined to try an escape?"

"The escape, by all means."

"Didn't I tell you so?" said Carl, turning toward Peter, who was considerably abashed in the presence of the women.

"You did," replied Peter, "but I needed not that assurance. I know not who would wish to tarry in the wilderness."

"All things are prepared—amply and snugly prepared," said Carl, once more directing his conversation to Viola. "There is only one difficulty in the way, and that cannot be avoided."

"And what is that?"

"Can you and Sarah endure the fatigue of walking to the river? There a boat awaits you."

"Fear not for us, Carl," replied Viola, "we can endure everything to escape from our horrid imprisonment."

"Then you are safe. Myself and Peter will lend you all the assistance in our power."

"And to-night——"

"Yes, certainly," interrupted Carl. "To-night we make the effort. Let it be at as early an hour as possible, for time is valuable."

"Ten o'clock?"

"Or earlier."

"It would not be safe to venture earlier," replied Viola. "It will be at a time when our little community is still."

"Let it be at that hour then. Peter has a watch, but how we can tell that hour after the darkness has set in, is more than I can determine. We must venture, however. You meet us in the wood beyond the clearing and toward the river. Let your preparations be few. You will need no provisions, for that is already provided for. Remember the lighter your load is, the greater will be your speed."

"We will act discreetly," said Viola, "and now that we understand each other, we will separate. I do not wish to excite a suspicion in the minds of the guard."

"Right," said Peter. "The old fable teaches us that caution is the parent of safety. Carl and myself will remain closely concealed."

And after the interchange of friendly greetings, Viola and Sarah returned to the clearing, and Carl and Peter once more secreted themselves.

To both parties, the watchers in the wood and the women in the cabin, the day was long and tedious, although it was bright and balmy. It wore away, however, and as the appointed hour approached Carl and the landlord moved up to the forest, on the river side of the cabins.

Here they awaited the arrival of the women.

As might be expected, the meeting was not unnecessarily delayed. As soon as the soldiers and the inhabitants of the village had retired, Viola and her servant left their dingy prison, and with

the caution and furtiveness of fear and hope, crossed the clearing and joined their friends.

“Now comes the trial!” said Peter, seizing the arm of Sarah. “If you can only endure a walk to the river, over this rough road and through these dark woods, your escape is certain!”

“Fear not!” replied the courageous girl, “we are, at all hazards, determined upon the attempt.”

And they started upon the tedious journey, Carl and Viola leading the uneven way.

Neither Peter or his friend had exaggerated the difficulties of the path, or the fatigue the fragile women must undergo. They bore up nobly, however, but they were weak, weary, and faint, when their longing eyes first caught a glimpse of the bright waters of the river.

The sun was high up, and Peter and Carl were in a fever of excitement. The boat was immediately unmoored, and dragged from her concealment, and the women seated within it.

“Now,” cried Peter, as Carl stepped into the boat, “bring out the Hollands. After this night’s labor, it is needed.”

Carl obeyed this injunction not unwillingly. The women were compelled to partake of the exhilarating beverage, and Carl and Peter took hearty potations. When the keg was deposited in its place, the landlord said:

“Now God bless you all! And may your further journey be as prosperous as your recent one has been arduous!”

“But,” exclaimed Viola in the greatest surprise, “do not you accompany us? Do we part here?”

“Yes. My further assistance is not

needed. I must return to Van Kempen’s Castle. Carl will conduct you to a place of safety, and to one who can and will protect you better than either of us!”

A meaning smile overspread the landlord’s countenance.

Carl returned Peter’s adieu and then dashed his oars into the water. The boat moved off up the stream, and Peter entered the broad path, and started for his home at a brisk pace.

“And whither are we bound, Carl?” asked Viola.

“To our place of safety—our place of security, and the only one that offers at this time!”

“But where?”

“To the Camp of the Blue Brotherhood!”

Sarah uttered a joyous exclamation, but Viola was silent. She felt, however, a tumult of delicious emotions.

She should see Bryan Blunday! Perhaps too, she thought, they would meet never to part again. She felt that she would no longer oppose Bryan’s desires for an immediate union, if he mentioned the subject to her.

Carl was fatigued from his night’s exertions, but he never plied his oars more vigorously.

He did not relax his exertions until the sun was low in the west, and then he effected a landing, determined to refresh himself with a quantity of his provisions, and another pull at the Hollands.

The women were also fatigued, and in need of refreshment.

The stores were accordingly spread under the branches of a hemlock, and

the little party enjoyed a sylvan repast.

As soon as the meal was concluded, the voyage was again continued, and with renewed ardor.

CHAPTER XVI.

BRYAN BLONDAY.

THROUGHOUT the summer of 1777, the Blue Brotherhood were unemployed, if we except a few unimportant excursions through the country, until the disastrous attempt of the gallant but unfortunate Herkimer to raise the siege of Fort Stanwix.

In this bloody and obstinate action they participated, and were most shockingly cut to pieces. After the retreat of St. Ledger and his barbarous hordes, they returned to their encampment.

In the afternoon of a day in October, a party of soldiers, who were amusing themselves on the banks of the river, discovered a skiff approaching them. It was impelled by a single oarsman, yet it proceeded swiftly through the water, showing the boatman to be both strong and skillful.

The sports of the Brothers were discontinued, and they watched the approach of the skiff.

At length they discovered, that in addition to the oarsman, the boat contained two women!

What could it mean?

It was a singular way of journeying in that troublesome time.

As the skiff neared them, it approached the shore, and it soon became clear that the inmates intended to land.

When the little vessel reached the shore, a voice hailed:

“Is this the encampment of the Blue Brotherhood?”

“Aye!” responded a soldier.

“Then we are friends.”

And Carl Knipper leaped ashore, and assisted the females to quit the boat. He then secured his craft in safety, and said:

“Thank God! our journey is done!”

The soldiers gathered around the strange visitors.

At length one of them recognized Carl, and said:

“It is our guide at Van Kempen’s Castle!”

“Aye!” said Carl, with a tone and air of pride; “I was your guide on the night you released Bryan Blonday!”

The Blue Brothers, one and all, swore that he was a capital fellow!

“Then conduct me to your quarters!” said Carl.

This was cheerfully done.

In the great room of the barracks, the room in which he had been initiated as one of the Brotherhood, Bryan Blonday was seated, with his bosom friend Captain Drake.

They were discoursing about the attack on the jail the night that Bryan was liberated.

Their attention was finally drawn to the sound of voices in another room.

“Show me Bryan Blonday!” exclaimed Carl Knipper.

Bryan recognized the voice.

He leaped from the chair, exclaiming

“It is my old friend, Carl Knipper.”

“Who?” asked Drake.

“Your guide across the ford, on the very night we were conversing about.”

Whilst Bryan was yet speaking, the

door was opened, and Carl advanced into the room!

One arm supported the trembling form of Viola Fordham, and upon the other leaned Sarah Fielding!

A ghost from the grave could not have surprised Bryan Blonday more completely.

He gazed for a moment, in doubt, but he could not be mistaken! It was Viola—his loved, his own Viola!

He rushed towards her, and she fell fainting into his arms.

Again she was pressed to the bosom of her lover.

Captain Drake at once perceived the state of the case, and ordered the room to be cleared. When the last straggler had left, he departed himself, and closed the door.

Viola soon revived.

After months of suffering and anguish, she was again with Bryan, was free from the power of Hans Van Kempen!

She wept freely.

And Bryan—he of the stout heart and stubborn will, he felt it impossible to restrain his emotions, and he mingled his tears with hers.

They were tears of joy.

We shall not attempt to describe the interview. It continued for two long hours, but to the lovers they were very brief.

Bryan opened the door and called for Captain Drake.

The captain presented himself.

"I have a favor to ask of you," Bryan said.

"Name it," said Drake.

"I desire to be united to this woman,

who has loved me long and truly. I am also resolved to be wed in the little chapel at Van Kempen's castle. For a bridal party I desire the attendance of the Blue Brotherhood, one and all!"

"Bravo!" cried the captain. "By my sword and commission! you shall be gratified! It will be a glorious revenge!"

"Then, in the morning we will depart for the settlement."

"Aye! and if the worshipful Patroon has erected another prison, it shall serve for another bonfire of rejoicing!"

And Drake retired, and announced the intentions of Bryan.

Again the boisterous troops rent the air with shouts:

"Huzza! for Bryan Blonday!"

With the dawn of the day the troopers were upon the move the next morning. Horses were provided for the delighted Carl and his party, and the wedding procession moved gaily and briskly forward, with the bugler at their head.

On the afternoon of the second day from their departure, the Blue Brotherhood crossed the ford, and galloped up to the door of the chapel, in Van Kempen's settlement.

Here the whole command came to a halt, and in a moment the village was aroused by the startling huzzah:

"Huzzah for Bryan Blonday!"

"What in the name of mercy does this mean?" exclaimed Peter Schnapps, who was sitting in his room, conversing with Bellamy and Fizzle. He ran to the door, and as he gazed on the unexpected spectacle, he said:

"In the name of the preacher! come here, gentlemen!"

Fozzle and Bellamy obeyed the request.

As they caught a view of the Brotherhood, the shout again went up :

"Huzzah for Bryan Blonday!"

One of the troopers dismounted, and walked rapidly towards the house of the Priest of the settlement.

Peter at once comprehended the meaning of the strange scene.

"A wedding!" he cried, and without waiting for an explanation he ran to the church.

Before he reached it, however, the Priest was within the altar, and Bryan and Viola were before it.

Peter rushed into the church, and, regardless of the sacred nature of the place, so great was his excitement, he shouted :

"Huzzah! for Bryan Blonday!"

A laugh from the troopers followed, but the ceremony proceeded.

Bryan and Viola were united.

The foundling had passed through one scene of excitement, and another awaited him.

He was conducted to the inn of Peter Schnapps, and introduced to his mother. Here the mystery of his birth was explained to him, and he was informed that the estates of Van Kempen's Castle were his own. The House of Delegates had confirmed his title, and Hans was already dispossessed.

The whole party, and in fact the whole settlement, adjourned to the castle, where the wedding was celebrated after the manner of the olden time!

A few words more and we have done.

Carl Knipper lived and died a member of Bryan's family, not in the capacity of a servant, but as an equal.

Hans died a few months after the change in his fortune.

The descendants of Peter Schnapps are yet inn-keeping, in the neighborhood of the settlement.

Fielding and his wife, and the foster sister of Bryan, were duly cared for by him, and they had often cause to be thankful for their parental kindness to

the FOUNDLING OF THE MOHAWK.

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